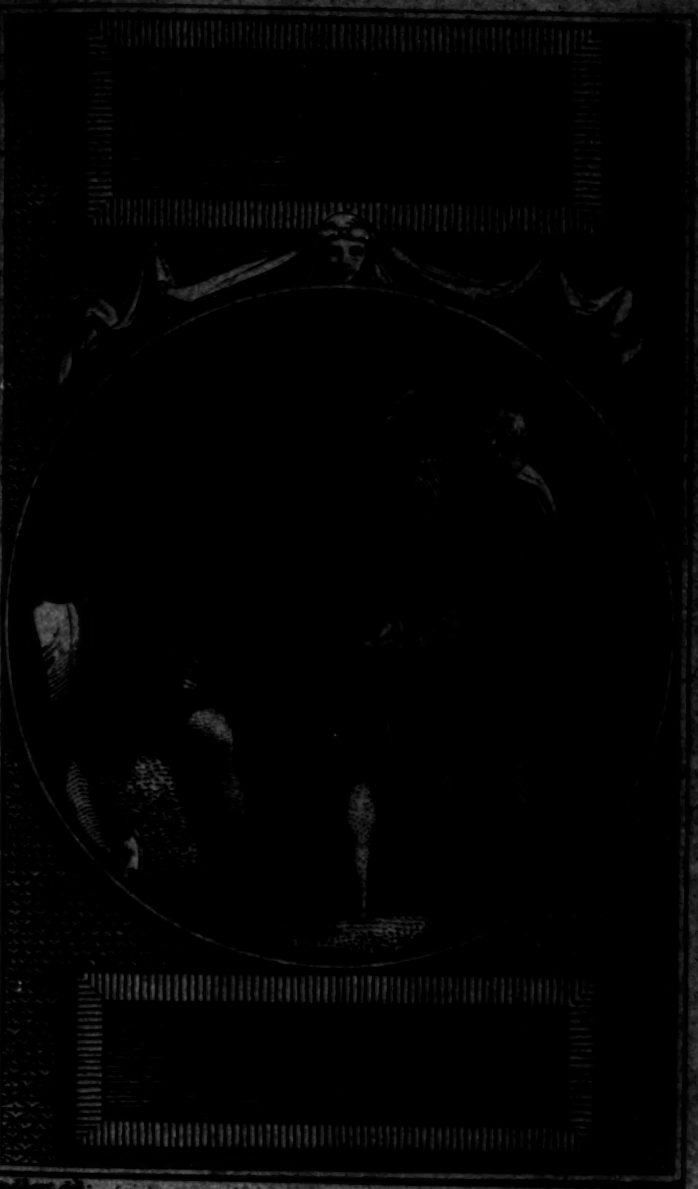

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BRITISH
MUSEUM

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From *Urry's* Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From *Tyrwhitt's* Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----
Of ditees and of ſonges glade,
The which he---made,
The londe fullfilled is over all. GOWER.

My maiſter CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----
Whom all this londe ſchulde of ryght preferre,
Sith of our langage he was the lode-ſterre----
That made firſt to dyſtylle and rayne
The gold dewe dropys of ſpeche and eloquence
Into our tunge thrugh his excellence. LYDGATE.

The honour of Engliſh tong is dede----
My mayſter CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,
Mirrour of fructuous entendement,
Univerſel fadir in ſcience----
This londis verray treſour and richeſſe----
The firſte fynder of our fayre langage. OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,
Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,
In eloquence balme, condict and diall,
Mylky fountane, clere ſtrand, and rois riall,
Of freſche endite throw Albioun iland braid. DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! roſe of rethouris all,
As in oure toung flour imperial
That raiſe in Brittane evir, quha reidis right
Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,
The freſche enamilt termes celeſtiall:
This mater couth haif illuminit full bricht,
Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,
Surmounting every toung terreſtriall
As far as Mayi's morrow dois midnight. DUNBAR.

VOL. VI.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Preſs, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1782.

BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VOL. VI.

CONTAINING HIS

CANTERBURY TALES, *viz.*

THE COKES TALE OF GAMEL. | THE PARDON. AND TAPEST.
THE PLOWMANS TALE, | THE MARCH. SECOND TALE,

&c. &c. &c.

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale fain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath ſayd hem in ſwiche Engliſh as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not ſayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath ſayd hem in another----
Who ſo that wol his large Volume ſeke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of Engliſh undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whoſe gentle ſpright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilſt he lived was the ſoveraigne head
Of ſhepherds all------- SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning ſtar,
To us diſcovers day from far;
His light thoſe miſts and clouds diſſolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he deſcending to the ſhades
Darkneſs again the age invades. DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who firſt with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
He ſang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each eſtate and age
The faſhions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying-----
Him who in times------
Dark and untaught began with charming verſe
To tame the rudeneſs of his native land. AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE CANTERBURY TALES.

THE COKE'S TALE OF GAMELYN.

Now lithin and liſtinith, and
Herkinith you aright,
And ye ſhullin herè me tell
You of a doughti knight.

Sir Johan of Boundis clepid was
This ilkè knight'is name;
Wele coudin he of noriture,
And eke of mochil game.

The Coke's Tale of Gamelyn] So many of the mſſ. have this Tale that I can hardly think it could be unknown to the former editors of this poet's Works; nor can I think of a reaſon why they neglected to publiſh it. Poſſibly they met only with thoſe mſſ. that had not this Tale in them, and contented themſelves with the number of Tales they found in thoſe mſſ. If they had any of thoſe mſſ. in which it is I cannot give a reaſon why they did not give it a place amongſt the reſt, unleſs they doubted of its being genuine; but becauſe I find it in ſo many mſſ. I have no doubt of it, and therefore make it publick, and call it the fifth Tale. In all the mſſ. it is called The Coke's Tale, and therefore I call it ſo in like manner: but had I found it without an inſcription, and had been left to my fancy to have beſtowed it on which of the pilgrims I had pleaſed, I ſhould certainly have adjudged it to the Squire's Yeoman, who though as minutely deſcribed by Chaucer and characterized in the third place, yet I find no Tale of his in any of the mſſ.: and becauſe I think there is not any one that would fit him ſo well as this, I have ventured to place his picture before this Tale, tho' I leave the Cook in poſſeſſion of the title. *Urry.*

Thre ſonnis this knight had, and with
His bodi he them wan;
The eldeſt was a mochè ſhrew,
And ſonè he began.
His brotherin lov'd thir ſadir,
And of him were agaſt;
Th' eldiſt deſerv'd his fadir's curſe,
And had it at the laſt.
The godè knighte his fadir did
Ylive ſo long and yore,
That Deth was comin him unto,
And handlid him full ſore.
The godè knight ycarid moch,
Sore ſike there as he lay,
How that his childerin ſhuldè
Lyvin after his day.
He haddè ben widè where, but
Noon huſbondè he was;
Allè the londe which that he had
It was verray purchas;
And fayn he woldè that it were
Dreſſid among them all,
That everich of them had his part
As it mightè befall.
Tho ſent he into the contrè
Aftir wiſè knightis,
To helpin dele his londis, and
Dreſſin them to rightis.

He ſent them word by letteris
That they ſhuld hyè blyve
If that they wol ſpekin with him
While that he was on live.
Sone as thoſe knightis herdin how
Thus ſekè that he lay,
Tho haddè they no mannir reſt
Nothir by night nor day
Tyll that they comin unto him,
There as he layd him ſtill,
Upon his deth'is bedde for to
Abidin Godd'is will.
Thus then ſaidin the godè knight,
Sekè there as he lay,
Lordis, I warnè you forſothe,
Withoutin any nay,
I may no lengir livin here
In this ſorowful ſtound,
For thorough Godd'is will ſupreme
Dethe drawith me to ground.
There ne was no one of them alle,
That herdin him aright,
That thei ne haddè mochil routh
Upon that ilkè knight;
And ſeidè, Sir, for Godd'is love
Ne diſmayin you nought,
God may don botè of balè
Which that is now ywrought.

Then anſwerid them the gode knight,
Sikè there as he lay,
Botè of balè God may ſend,
I wote it is no nay.

But I beſekè you knightis,
Al for the love of me,
Goith and dreſſith my londis
Among my ſonis thre.

And, frendis, for the love of God
Delith them nat amys,
And forgettith not Gamèlyn,
My yongè ſone that is.

Takith hedè unto that one
As well as to that other;
Seldome ye ſein any heir
That helpè woll his brother.

Tho lettin they the knighte liggin
Which that was not in hele,
And in thei wentin to counſaile
His londis for to dele;

For to delin them all to oon
That was ther only thought,
And for that Gamelyn yongiſt was
He ſhuldè havin nought.

Al the londè which that there was
They deltin it in two,
And letè Gamèlyn the yonge
Withoutin londè go.

And evèrich of them ſeidin
Till othir fullè loude,
His bretherin mowe give him londe
Whan that he godis koude.
Whan they had delid the londis
Aftir their owne will,
Tho camin they unto the knight
There as he lay full ſtill,
And toldin unto him anon
How that they hadd ywrought,
And the knight there as he ſeke lay
Ylikid it right nought.
Then ſeidè the knight angrily,
I ſware by Seint Martyn
For all that which ye have ydone
Yet is the londè myn.
For Godd'is love, my neighbouris,
Standith ye allè ſtill,
And I woll delin my londe
Aftir myn ownè will.
Johan myn eldiſt ſone ſhall
Y havè plowis five,
That was my fadir's heritage
While that he was on live;
And my middilliſt ſonè ſhall
Five plowis have of lond
That I holpe for to gettin
With myn own rightè hond;

And all myn othir purchasis
Of landis and of ledes,
That I bequethè Gamèlyn,
And allè my gode stedes.
And I besekè you, gode men,
That lawis con of lond,
For Gamèlyn'is love that
Thus my bequest may stond.
Thus delid hath the gode knightè
His londè be his dai,
Right upon his deth'is beddè,
Sore sike there as he lay:
And sone aftirwerdis he
Lay as a stonè still,
And dyid whan the tymè came,
As it was Crist'is will.
Anon aftir that he was dede,
And undir gras ygrave,
Tho sonè the eldir brothir
Begylid the yongè knave.
He tokin into his hondis
His londis and his lede,
And also Gamèlyn himself
To clothin and to fede.
He clothid him and feddè him
Evil and ekè wroth,
And letin his londis for fare,
And als his housis both;

His parkis eke, and his wodis,
And diddè nothyng wel,
And fithin he it aboughtè
On his own feire fell.

So longè tyme was Gamèlyn
In his brother'is Hall,
For the ſtrengiſt of godè will
They doutidin him all.

There ne was none wight in that place,
Nothir yongè ne olde,
That woldè wrathin Gamèlyn
Were he nevir ſo bold.

Gamelyn ſtode upon a day
In his brother'is yerde,
And he began with his hondè
To handilin his berde.

He thoughtin upon his londis,
That layin long unfawe,
And alſo of his feire okis,
That dounè were ydraw.

His parkis werin al brokin,
And al his deir reved;
Of allè his gode ſtedis noon
Was there with him beleved;

His houſis werein unhelid
And full evilly dight;
Tho thought this yongè Gamèlyn
It wentè not aright.

Aftir camè his brothir in
Ywalkyng ſtatelich thare,
And ſeidè unto Gamèlyn,
What? is our metè yare?
Tho Gamèlyn ywrothid hym,
And ſwore by Godd'is boke,
Thou ſhalt y go bake, luke, thy ſelf;
I wol not be thy coke.
How, brothir Gamèlyn, quod he,
Thus anſweriſt me thou?
Thou ſpakiſt nevir ſoche a word
Yet as thou doiſt now.
By my ſaith, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Now me it thinkith nede;
Of all the harmis that I have
I nevir yit toke hede.
My parkis ben y brokin, and
My deir ben yreved;
Of myn harnis and my ſtedis
Noght is there me beleved.
Al that my fadir me bequethe
Al goith now to ſhame,
And therefore have thou Godd'is curſe,
Brothir John by thy name.
Than thus beſpakin his brothir,
That rapè was of vees,
Stondith ſtillè, thou gadiling,
And holdith right thy pees:

Thou ſhaltè ben fulfaign to have
Thy metè and thy wede.
What ſpekiſt thou, thou gadiling,
Of lond othir of lede?

Then ſeidè to him Gamèlyn,
The childè that was yinge,
Chriſt'is curſè mote he havin
That clepith me Gadlyng.
I am no wors gadlyng than the,
Parde ne no wors wight,
But born I was of a lady,
And gottin of a knyght.

Ne durſt he not to Gamèlyn
Not oo fote ferthir go,
But clepid to him his meinè,
And ſeidè to them tho;

Goith and betith wele this boy,
And ravith him his wit,
And let him lere anothir time
To anſwerin me bett.

Then ſeid the chyld, yong Gamèlyn,
. . . . . .
Chriſt'is curſè mote thou havin
What? brother art thou myn.

And if that I ſhall algatis
Y betin be anon,
Chriſt'is curſè mote thou havin
But that thou be that one.

And right anon his brothir did,
In that his gretè hete,
Makin his meinè fett ſtavis,
This Gamèlyn to bete.

Whan everich of them had a ſtaff
Into his hond nomin,
Gamèlyn was awarè tho,
He forſaugh them comin.

Tho Gamèlyn ſaugh them comin
He lokid ovir all,
And was warè of a peſtil
Stodè undir the wall.

And Gamèlyn was fully light,
And thidir gan he lepe,
And droffe alle his brother's men
Right ſonè on an hepe.

He lokid like a wild lion,
And laidin on gode wone;
Tho whan his brothir ſeyè that
He begannè to gonne.

He fleigh up untill a loftè,
And ſhet the dorè faſt:
Thus Gamèlyn with his peſtil
Madè them all agaſt.

Somè for Gamèlyn's love,
And ſome for his envie,
Allè withdrowin them to halves
Tho he began to pleie:

What now? seide Gamèlyn; brothir,
Evil motè ye the;
Wollè ye beginnin contek
And than so sonè fle?

Gamèlyn sought his brothir tho
Whithir he was yflowe,
And saugh where that he lokid out
At a solere windowe.

Brothir, tho seidè Gamèlyn,
Comith a litil nere,
And I woll techin the a plaie
Attè the bokillere.

His brothir to hym answerid,
And swore by Seint Richere,
While the pestil is in thyn honde
I woll comin no nere.

Brothir, I woll makin the pece,
I swere by Crist'is ore;
Castith away the pestil tho,
And wrathè the na more.

I mot nedis, seide Gamèlyn,
Wrathè me at onys,
For that thou woldist make thy men
To brekin my bonis.

Ne had I haddin meyn and might,
In myn ownè twey armes,
To have y pushin them fro me
They would have done me harmes.

To Gamèlyn tho ſeidin his
Brothir; Be thou not wrothe,
For to ſein the havin harme
Me werin righte lothe.

I ne did it not, my brothir,
But right for a fonding,
For to lokin if thou were ſtrong,
And art ſo very ying.

Come adoun then to me, quod he,
And grauntè me my bone,
Of po thing I woll aſkin the,
And we ſhull ſaughtè ſone.

Adoun then camin his brothir,
That ſikill was and fell,
And was ſwithè right ſore aghaſt
Of that ilkè peſtil.

He ſeidè, Brothir Gamèlyn;
Aſkè me now thy bone,
And loke that you me blamè, but
I grauntè it full ſone.

Tho ſeidin yongè Gamèlyn;
Brothir mynè, I wiſs
And if we ſhullè ben at one
Thou muſt me grauntè this:

Al that my fadir me bequethe,
While that he was on live,
Thou muſtè do me it to have,
If that we ſhull not ſtrive.

That thou ſhalt havè, Gamèlyn,
I ſwere by Criſt'is ore,
Al that thy fadir the bequethe,
Though thou woldiſt have more.
Thy londè, that now lyith lie,
Full well it ſhall be ſowe,
And thyne houſis yraiſid up
That now ben layd full lowe.
Thus ſeide the knight to Gamèlyn,
But only with his mouth,
And thoughtè but of falſèneſs,
As he right welè couth.
The knightè thoughtin on traiſon,
But Gamèlyn on noon,
And went and kiſſid his brothir,
And then they were at oon.
Alas for yongè Gamèlyn!
Nothing at all he wiſt
With ſwichè falſè traiſon
His brothir hath him kiſt.
Lithinith and leſtinith, and
Holdith you ſtille your tonge,
And ye ſhull herin ſtraunge talking
Of Gamèlyn the yonge.
There happid to be there beſide
Tryid a wraſtiling,
And therefore there was yſettin
A ram and als a ring.

And Gamèlyn was in a will
To wendè thereunto,
For to previn his mighte, and se
What that he couthè do.
Now brothir myne, quod Gamèlyn,
By holie Seint Richere
Thou muſtè nedis lene to night
Me a litil courſere,
That is freſhè to the ſporis,
Upon him for to ride;
I muſtin on an errand go
A littil here beſide.
Be God, ſeidè his brothir tho,
Of ſtedis in my ſtall
Goith and chefith the the beſt,
And ſparith none of alle,
Of ſtedis or of courſeris,
That ſtondith 'hem beſide,
And tellith me, my gode brothir,
Whithur thou wiltè ride.
Herè beſidis, brothir, is
Y cryid a wraſtling,
And therefore ſhallè ben y ſett
A ram and als a ring.
Mochè worſhip it were ſothly,
Brothir, unto us all
Might I the ram and als the ring
Bringin home to the Hall.

A ſtedè there was ſadilid,
Smarth was it and eke flete;
Gamèlyn diddin a peire of
Sporis faſt on his fete.
He ſat his fote in the ſtirrop,
The ſtedè he beſtrode,
And towardis the wraſtiling
The yongè childè rode.
Tho Gamèlyn the yongè was
Riddin out at the gate
The falſè knight his own brothir
Lokkid it aftir thate.
And he beſoughtin Jeſu Chriſt,
That is of hevin king,
That he mightè brekin his nek
In that ilk wraſtiling.
Aſſone as Gamèlyn cam there
The wraſtling placè was
He lightid down of the ſtede
And ſtodin on the gras.
And ther he herd a frankelyn
Weloway for to ſing,
And beganin all bittirly
His handis for to wring.
Godè man, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Why makiſt thou this fare?
Is there no man that may you help
Out of this nicè care?

Alas! ſeidè this frankèlyn,
That evir I was bore!
For tweiè ſtalworthè ſonis
I wene I have forlore.

A champion is in the place
That has wroughtin me ſorow,
For he hath ſlayn my too ſonis
But if that God them borrow.

I woldè givin ten poundis,
Be Jeſu Criſt, and more,
With the nonis I fond a man
To handilin him ſore.

Godè man, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Wilt thou this welè done?
Holdè my hors while that my man
Ydrawith of my ſhone.

And help my man alſo to kepe
My clothis and my ſtede,
And I woll into the place gon
And loke how I may ſpede.

By God, ſeidè the frankelyn,
It ſhall right ſo be don,
I woll my ſilfin be thy man
To drawin of thy ſhone.

And wendè you into the place,
Swete Jeſu Criſt the ſpede,
And dredè noght of thy clothis
Nor of thy godè ſtede.

Barefote and ungert Gamèlyn
Into the ringe came,
Allè that werin in the place
Hedin of him the name,
How he durſtin aventure him
On him to don his might
That was ſo doughti a champion
In wraſtling and in fight.
Upſtertè tho the champion
Full rapely right anon,
Towardis yongè Gamèlyn
He tho began to gon,
And ſeidè, Who is thy ſadir,
And who is eke thy ſire?
Forſothè thou art a gret ſole
For that thou camiſt hire.
Anon Gamèlyn anſwerid
The ſtout champion tho,
Thou knewiſt full wele my fadir
Whilè that he couthè go:
Whilis that he was on live,
I ſwere by Seint Martyn,
Sir John of Boundis was his name,
And I am Gamèlyn.
Felawe, ſeidè the champion,
So evir mote I thrive,
I knew right welè thy fadir
While that he was on live;

And thy selfin, yonge Gamèlyn,
I wil that thou it here,
Whilis thou wert a yongè boy
A mochè shrew thou were.
Then seidè yongè Gamèlyn,
And swore bi Criss'is ore,
Now am I oldir wox thou shalt
Y findin me a more.
Be God, seidè the champion,
Welcome motè thou be;
Come thou onys in my honde
Shaltin thou nevir the.
It was welè within the night,
And bright the mone shone,
Whan Gamèlyn and the champion
Togidir gan to gon.
The champion castè tornis
To Gamèlyn that was prest,
And Gamèlyn stodin stillè,
And bad him don his best.
Then seiden yongè Gamèlyn
Unto the champion,
Now that I have fully provid
Many tornis of thine,
Thou mostin, seidè Gamèlyn,
Prove oon or two of myn.

Gamèlyn to the champion
Yede ſmartily anon,
Of all the tornis that he coude
He ſhewid him but one;
And keſt him on the liftè ſide
That thre ribbis to brak,
And thereunto his left armè,
That gaf a grettè crak.
Then ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn
Smertly to him anon,
Shall it be holdin for a caſt,
Or ellis go for none?
Bi God, ſeidè the champion,
Whedir ſo that it be,
He that ones comith in thyn hand
Shallin he nevir the.
Than ſeidè the frankèlyn, that
Thre ſonis there had lore,
Bleſſid be thou, yonge Gamèlyn,
That evir thou were bore!
For now unto the champion
This have I for to ſeie,
This is the yongè Gamèlyn
That taughtè the to pleie.
Ayen anſwerde the champion,
That likid nothyng well,
He is allè their maiſtir, and
His pleiè is right fell.

Sithin that I wraſtilid firſt
It is agon full yore,
But I was nevir in my life
Handilid ſo before.

Yonge Gamèlyn ſtode in the place
Allone withoutin ferk,
And ſeide, If there be any mo
Let them comè to werk.

The champion which that painid
Him to workin ſo ſore,
It ſemith by his countinaunce
That he willè no more.

Gamèlyn in the placè ſtode
Stillè as any ſtone
For to abidin wraſtiling,
But there ycomith none.

There ne was none with Gamèlyn
That woldè wraſtle more,
For he handilid the champion
So wonderouſly ſore.

Two gentilmeinè that owned the place
Come to Gamelyn, God geve them grace!
And ſeidè to him, Have done on
Thy hoſin and thy ſhone;
Forſothè at this timè all
This faire it is ydone.

Tho ſeidè to them Gamèlyn,
So mote I well yfare,
I havè not yet halvindele
Yſoldè all my ware.
Than ſeide the champion ſo broke,
I may it welè ſwere
He is a fole that thereof bieth,
Thou ſelleſt it ſo dere.
Tho ſeide to him the frankèlyn,
That was in mochill care,
Fellaw, he ſaidè, whi lakkiſt
Thou ſo moche of his ware?
Be Seint Jame, that in Galis is,
That many man has ſought,
Yet it is moche too godè chepe
That thou haſtin ybought.
Tho that the wardinis werin
Of that ilk wraſtiling
Comin forth, and brought Gamèlyn
The ram and als the ring.
And thus wann yongè Gamèlyn
The ram and eke the ring,
And wentè forth with mochil joy
Homeward in the morning.
His brothir ſe where that he come
With all the grettè rout,
And bad the porter ſhute the gate,
And holdin him without.

The porter of his lord'is word
Was ſo right ſore agaſt,
And ſtert anon unto the gate
And lokkid it full faſt.

Now lithinith and leſtinith
Bothè yongè and old,
And ye ſhullin herè gamin
Of Gamèlyn the bold.

Gamèlyn comith thereunto
For to have comin in;
But all in vaine; the dorê then was
Y ſhitt faſt with a pyn.

Than ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn,
Porter, undo the yate,
For many a godè mann'is
Sonnè ſtondith thereat.

Then anſwerid him the porter,
And ſwore by Godd'is berde,
Thou ne ſhalt, frendè Gamèlyn,
Comin into this yerde.

Thou lyiſt, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
So broukin I my chynne:
He ſmote the wikit with his fote,
And brak away the pyn.

The porter ſtreightwey ſaughè tho
It might no bettir be,
He ſette fote on erthè, and
Faſt he began to fle.

Bi my faith, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
That travaile is ylore,
For I am on fote as light as
Thow, though thow had yſwore.
Gamelyn ovirtoke the porter,
And his teenè ywrak,
And gert him full upon the nek,
That he the bon to brak;
And toke him by that oon armè,
And threw him in a well;
Seven hundrid fadom it was depe,
As I have herdè telle.
Whan Gamèlyn the yongè thus
Had yplayid his play,
Allè that in the yerdè were
Withdrewin them away,
That dredin him full ſorè for
The wreke that he wrought,
And for the fayir cumpany
That he had thithir brought.
Yong Gamèlyn yede to the gate
And letè it up wide,
He letin in allè the rout
That gon woldin or ride;
And ſeidè, Ye ben ywelcome
Withoutin any greve,
For we wol ben maiſteris here,
And aſkè no man leve.

It n'as but yesterdai I last,
Seide yongè Gamèlyn,
In my brother'is seleris
Five tonn of right gode wyne.
I willè not this cumpany
Partyn with me on twyn,
And if ye will don aftir me,
Whil any sope is inn:
And if my brothir grutchith us,
Or makith foulè chere,
Othir for spence of mete and drink
That we shull spendin here,
I am the ovircatorin,
And bere our althir purse,
He shallè have for his grutching
Sancta Maria's curse.
My brothir is but a nigon,
I swere by Crist'is ore,
And we woll spendè largily
That he hath sparid yore.
And whoso that makith grutching
That we do here ydwell,
He shall go unto the porter
Into the drawè well.
Sevin dayis and sevin nightes
Gamèlyn held his fest,
With mochè solace that there was,
And eke no mannir heste.

All in a litil torrit his
Brothir laydè yſteke,
And ſaugh him waſtin his godis,
But durſtè not to ſpeke.
Right erli in a morrowning,
Upon the eightè day,
The geſtis come to Gamèlyn,
And woldè gon thir way.
Lordis, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
And wollin ye ſo hie?
Allè the wyne is not yet dronk,
So broukin I mine eye.
Yonge Gamèlyn in his hertè
Was ſorowfull and wo
Whan that his geſtis toke their leve
And fro him woldè go.
He woldè that they had dwellid
Lengir, and they ſeide Nay,
But bitaught Gamèlyn to God,
And bad him have gode dai.
Thus madè Gamèlyn his feſte,
And brought it well to end,
And aftirward his geſtis toke
Levè their way to wend.
Now lithinith and liſtinith,
And holdith you your tonge,
And ye ſhullin herè gamin
Of Gamèlyn the yonge.

Herkinith, Lordilingis, and
Liſtinith you aright,
Whan al the geſtis werin gon
How Gamèlyn was dight.
Allè the while that Gamèlyn
Had hold his mangerie
His brothir thought on him bewreke
With his falſe trecherie;
Tho whan that Gamèlyn is geſtes
Y ridin were and gon
Gamèlyn ſtode anon alone,
Frendè tho had he none.
Tho aftir this full ſone it fell,
Within a littil ſtound,
That Gamèlyn was takin, and
Full hardly was he bound.
Than forth comith the falſè knight
Out of the ſolerè,
And to Gamèlyn his brothir
He goith fullè nere,
And ſeidin unto Gamèlyn,
Who made the ſo bold
For to deſtroyin and waſtè
The ſtore of my houſhold?
Brothir, anſwerid Gamèlyn,
Now wrathè the right noght,
For it is many day agon
Sithins it was ybought:

For, brothir, thou haſtin haddè,
I ſwere by Seint Richere,
Of fiftene plowis of londè
This full ſixtenè yere;
And of allè the beſtis which
Thou haſtè forth ybredd,
That my fadir to me bequethe
Upon his deth'isbedd:
Of allè this full ſixtene yere
I gevè the the prow,
For the metè and the drinkè
That we have ſpendid now.
Than thus ſeidè the falſe knight,
(Full evil mote he the)
Herkinith, brothir Gamelyn,
What I woll gevin the;
For of my body, brothir, heir
Y gettin have I none;
I wollè makin the myheir,
I ſwerè by Seint John.
Par mafay, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
And if that it ſo be,
And thou thinkiſt as thou ſeyiſt,
May God yeldin it the!
Nothing wiſtè yong Gamèlyn
Of his brother'is gile,
And therefore he him begilid
In verry littil while.

Gamèlyn, ſeide he, ó thing
I nedis muſt the tell,
Tho whan thou threwè my porter
Into the drawè well,
I ſworè in that wrathè, and
In that my gretè mote,
That thou ſhuldiſt ybondè be
Both hondè and eke fote:
And therefore I beſechè the,
My brothir Gamèlyn,
Letith thou noght me be forſworn,
As brothir art thou mine;
But letith me ybindin the
Both hondè and eke fote,
For me to holdin myne avough,
Right as I the behote.
Brothir, tho ſeide Gamèlyn,
As ſo motin I the,
Thou ſhaltè not ben forſworin
For the love of me.
Tho madin thei this Gamèlyn
To ſitte, might he not ſtand,
Tyll that he him ybondin had
Both fote and alſo hand.
The falſè knight his brothir of
Gamèlyn was agaſt,
And ſentè aftir fetteris
To fetterin him faſt.

His brothir madè leſingis
On him ther as he ſtode,
And toldè them that comin in
That Gamèlyn was wode.
Gamèlyn ſtode to a poſt
Y bondin in the Hall,
And tho that ther ycomin in
Lokid upon him all.
Evir ſtodè yong Gamèlyn
Evin boltè upright,
But mete nor drink ne had he none
Nowthir by day ne night.
Tho ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn,
Brothir myn, by my hals
Now I have wele eſpyid that
Thou art a parti fals.
Had I but wiſtè that treſon
That thou haddiſt yfond
I woldin have gevin ſtrokis
Or I had ben ybound.
Gamèlyn ſtodè thus bondin
As ſtill as any ſtone
For too dayis and too nightis,
And metè had he none.
Then ſeide at laſt this Gamèlyn,
That ſtodè boundin ſtrong,
Adam Spencer, methinkith that
I faſtè al to long;

Therefore, Adam le Diſpencer,
Now I beſechè the,
For the mochè lovè with which
My fadir lovid the,
If thou may comin to the kaies,
Leſith me out of bond,
And for-thi I woll departin
With the of my fre lond.
Than him anſwerid this Adam,
Which that was the Spencer,
I have yſervid thy brothir
This full ſixtenè yere,
And if I ſhuldè letin you
To gon out of his boure
He woldin aftirwardis ſcye
That I were a traytour.
Adam, anſwerid Gamèlyn,
So broukin I myn hals,
Thou ſhaltè findin my brothir
At the laſt rightè fals;
And therefore, brothir Adam, me
Loſè out of my bonds,
And I wollè departin with
The of myn own fre londs.
Upon ſo gode a forewardè
Saidin Adam, I wis
I wollè doin thereunto
Allè that in me is.

Adam, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
As ſo mowin I the,
I woll holdè the covènaunt,
An thou too wollè me.
Anon as Adam his lordè
To beddè was ygone,
Adam tokè the kaies, and lat
Gamèlyn out anon.
He unlokid yonge Gamèlyn
Both hondis and eke fete,
On hope of the avaunc̀ement
Which that he him bèhete.
Then ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn,
Thankid be Godd'is ſonde,
For now that I am yloſid
Both fote and alſo hond!
Had I but etin a litil,
And thereto dronk aright,
There is none in this houſè that
Shuld bindè me this night.
Tho Adam tokè Gamèlyn,
As ſtill as any ſtone,
And haddin him into the ſpence
Right rapily anon;
And ſettin him to his ſoupere
Right in a privie ſtede,
And badin hym do gladily,
And Gamèlyn ſo dede.

Anon affone as Gamèlyn
Had etin wel and fine,
And thereunto had ydrankin
Well of the reddè wyne,
Adam, ſeide yongè Gamèlyn,
Tell what is now thy rede;
For me to go to my brothir,
And gerdin of his hede?
No, Gamèlyn, ſeidin Adam,
It ſhallè not be ſo,
But I can tellè the a rede
That is yworth the too.
I wotè wele forſothè that
(And this it is no nay)
We ſhullin have a mangerie
Rightè upon Sonday;
Of abbotis and priouris
Full many here ſhal be,
And othir men of holie cherch,
As I can tellè the:
Thou ſhaltè ſtond up by the poſt,
As thou were hondè faſt,
And I ſhall them leve unlok, that
Away thou may them caſt:
And whan that they have y etin,
And waſhin have their hondes,
Tho thou ſhalt beſpekin them all
To bring the out of bondes:

And if that they will borrow the
That werin a gode game,
Than werin thou out of prifon
And I als out of blame;
But if that evèrich of them
Sayè unto us Nay,
I ſhullè don anothir thing,
I ſwerè by this day.
Thou ſhallè have a godè ſtaffe,
And I woll have another,
And Criſt'is curſè have that oon
That failè ſhall that othir.
Ye, for God, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
I ſay it right for me
If that I failin on my ſide
Than evil mote I the.
If that we ſhullin algatis
Aſſoile them of thire ſynne;
Warnith me, my brothir Adam,
Whan that we ſhall begynn.
Now Gamèlyn, ſeidin Adam,
By Seintè Charitè
I wollè warnè the beforn
Whan that the time ſhall be.
Whan that I twinkin upon the
Lokè for to be gon,
And caſt away the fetteris,
And come to me anon.

Adam, ſeidè yong Gamèlyn,
Y bliſſid be thy bones!
That is a righte gode counſaile
Ygevin for the nones.
If that they ſhullin wernè me
To bring the out of hendes
I wollè ſettin gode ſtrokis,
Full right upon their lendes.
Tho the Sondy was ycomin,
And theſe folk to the feſte;
Faire they werein ywelcomid
Bothè the leſte and meſte.
And evir as they at the Hall
Dorè were comin in
They evèrich caſtin an eie
On yongè Gamèlyn.
The falſè knight his own brothir,
So full of trecherie,
Allè the geſtis that there were
At that ilk mangerie
Of Gamèlyn his own brothir
He toldin them with mouth
Allè the harmis and the ſhame
That e're he tellè couth.
Tho they werein yſervid ſtreit
Of meſſis too or thre;
Than ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn,
How do ye ſervè me?

It ne is not wele yſervid,
Be God that allè made,
That I ſhold ſittin here faſting
And othir men make glade.
The falſè knightè his brothir,
Thereas that he yſtode,
Toldin to allè his geſtis
That Gamèlyn was wode.
And Gamèlyn there ſtodè ſtill,
And anſwerid right noght,
But of Adam'is wordis he
Heldè ſtill in his thought.
Tho Gamèlyn began to ſpeke,
Right doulefully withall,
Unto the grettè lordis that
Y ſatyn in the Hall:
My Lordlingis, tho feidin he,
For Criſt'is paſſion
Helpin to bringè Gamèlyn
Out of thilkè priſon.
Than ſeidè to him an abbot,
(Sorow upon his cheke!)
He ſhallin have Criſt'is curſe
And Seintè Maries eke,
That ſhall the out of this priſon
Beggin owthir borow,
But evir worthè hym full wele
That doth the mykil forow.

And anon aftir that abbot
Than ſpakin anothir,
I woldè that thyn hede were of
Though thou were my brothir.
Allè that the ſhall borrowin
Motè them foulè fall;
And thus yſeidin allè they
That werin in the Hall.
Than ſeidè to him a priour,
Evil mowin he thrive!
It is grettè ſorow and care,
Boy, that thou art on live.
On, on, ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn,
So broukin I my bone,
Now that I havin eſpyid
That frendis have I none.
A curſid mot he worthè be,
Bothè fleſhè and blode,
That evir doth to priouris
Or abbotes any gode
Anon Adam thè Diſpencer
Takin up hath the cloth,
And lokid unto Gamèlyn,
And ſaugh that he was wroth.
Adam of the pantrie at thilk
Timè litil he thought,
And too godè ſtavis unto
The Hallè dore he brought.

Adam lokid on Gamèlyn,
And he was war anon,
And cast awaie the fetteris,
And began for to gon.
Tho he camin unto Adam,
He toke to the one staff,
And begannin to werkè wele,
And gode strokis he gaff.
Gamèlyn came into the Hall,
And Adam Spencer both,
And lokid them all abourin
As they haddè ben wroth.
Gamèlyn sprenith holi watir
All with an okin spire,
That some of them that stode upright
Fillin into the fire.
There was no mannir lewdè man
That in the Hallè stode
That woldè doin Gamèlyn
Any thingè but gode.
But thei stodè besidin, and
Letè them bothè werch,
For thei ne haddè no routhè
Of men of holi cherch.
Of abbot or of priour, or
Of monk or of canon,
That Gamèlyn hath ovirtoke,
Anon they yedin doun.

There ne was none of them allè
That with his ſtaff ymette
That he made them ovirthrowe,
And quyttè them his dette.
Tho Gamèlyn, feidè Adam,
For Seintè Charite
Payith, I pray, gode liveray,
And for the love of me;
And I wollè kepin the dore;
Se evir here I maſſe
Er that they ben aſſoilyid
Ther ſhalle noon ypaſſe.
Doutè the noght, ſeide Gamèlyn,
While that we ben in fere;
But kepè thou welè the dore
And I woll werkin here;
Beſtorrith the, gode Adam, and
Ne lettith none yfle,
And we ſhall tellè largily
How many here there be.
To Gamèlyn ſeidin Adam,
Doith them all but gode,
For thei hen men of holi cherch;
Drawith of them no blode:
Savith right wele the coroune,
And doith them no harmes,
But brekith bothè their leggis,
And ſithin here thir armes.

Thus Gamèlyn and Adam hath
Y wroughtin rightè faſt,
And pleidin with the monkis tho,
And madè them agaſt.

Forth hidir they comè riding
Full jolily with ſwaines,
But home agen they werin ledde
In cartis and in waines.

Tho as they haddin all ydone
Than ſeidin a gray frere,
Alas! alas! my Lord Abbot,
What diddè we now here?

Tho that we hithir did ycome
It was a coldè rede;
Us had far bettir ben at home
With watir and with brede.

While Gamèlyn made orderis
Of monkis and of frere
Evir ſtodè his brothir ſtille,
And madè foulè chere.

Tho Gamèlyn up with his ſtaff,
That he full welè knew,
And grettin him upon the nek,
That he him overthrewe,

A litil above the girdil
The riggin bone to braſt,
And ſett him in the fetteris
There as he ſattin arſt.

Sittith thou there, my brothir John,
Tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
For to colin thy hotte bodie,
As I did colè myn.
And ſwithe as they yhaddè wele
Wrokin them on their ſone,
They aſkid for the watir, and
They wiſhin them anon.
What ſome of them for their lovè,
And ſomè for their awe,
Allè the ſervauntis ſervid
Them of the beſtè law.
The ſhereff was themnis away
But about a five myle,
And all was toldin untohim
Within a littil whyle,
How Gamèlyn and Adam had
Ydon a ſorry res,
Boundin and woundin many men
Agen the king'is pece.
Eftſonis tho begannin ſone
Striffè for to awake,
And the ſhiregereve about did
Caſt Gamèlyn to take.
Now lithinith and leſtinith,
So God geve you gode fine,
And ye ſhull herin a gode game
Of yongè Gamèlyne.

Now four-and-twenty yongè men,
That holdin them full bold,
Comin unto the shiregereve,
And seidè that they wold
Both Gamèlyn and eke Adam
Y settè be the way;
The shiregereve gafè them leve
Tho soth as I you say.
Thes yongè meinè bidin them
Fast, woldè they not lynne
Tyll that they comin to the gate
There Gamèlyn was inne.
Thy knokidin upon the gate,
The porter tho was nye,
And lokid forth out at an hole,
As man that was full slye.
The porter had beholdin them
But for a litil while,
He lovid welè Gamèlyn,
And was adrad of gile,
And forthi letè the wiket
Y stondin fullè still,
And askid them that stant without
What ywas their will?
For allè the gret cumpany
Than spake bot one alone,
Undo the gatis, porter, and
Latè us in ygone.

Then ſeidè to them the portery,
So broukin I my chynne,
Ye ſhullè ſayin your errand
Or that ye comin inne.
Say to Gamèlyn and Adam,
If that their wille it be,
We wollè ſpekin here with them
Two wordis othir three.
Fellaw, ſeidè the porter tho,
Stondith thou ther yſtill,
And I woll wend to Gamèlyn
To wetin of his wille.
And in wentè the porter tho
To Gamèlyn anon,
And ſeidè, Sire, I warnè you
That here be come your fone;
For lo! the ſhiregreev'is men
Now ben all at the gate
For to ytekin you bothè;
Shalìe ye not eſcape.
Porter, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
So mote I welè the,
I woll allowè the thy wordes
Whan I my timè ſe.
Go ageyn, porter, to the gate,
And dwell with them a while,
Awaitin, and thou ſhaltè ſe
Right ſone, porter, a gile.

Adam. tho seidè Gamèlyn,
Lokè the to be gon,
We havè foomen at the gate,
And frendis nevir one.

It ben the shiregerev'is men
That hithir ben comin,
They ben yswore togideris,
That we shull be nomin.

To Gamèlyn seidè Adam,
Hiè the righte belyve,
And if I failè the this day
Than evil mote I thryve.

And we shullin so welcomè
The shiregerev'is men,
That some of them I trow shall makè
Their beddis in the fen.

Then thorough the posternè gate
Yong Gamèlyn out went,
And a gode sturdie cartè staffe
In his hondè he hent.

And Adam Spencer hentè sone
Anothir grettè staffe
For to helpè yong Gamèlyn,
And gode strokis he gaffe.

Adam yfellid hath his tweyne,
And Gamèlyn felled thre,
The tothir settè fete on erth,
And fast began to fle.

What? seidin Adam Spencer tho,
So evir hire I masse
I have right gode redde wyne,
Pray drinkith er ye passe.
Nai, nai! by God, seide they tho,
Thy drink is nothing gode,
It wolde makin mann'is brayne
To lyin in his hode
Yong Gamelyn tho stode still,
And lokid him about,
And saide, The shiregereve comith
With a full grette rout.
Adam Spencer, seid Gamelyn,
Myrede it is now this,
Abidin we not lengir here
Lest we farin amys.
I rede that we to wode ygonn
Er that we be yfound;
Betir is there lose for to gonn
Than in the toune ybound.
Adam then toke by the hond
This yonge Gamelyn,
And eche of them to the othir
Drankin a draft of wyne,
And aftirwardis toke their course,
And wente streight their way;
Tho fond the shiregereve the nest,
But in it was none ay.

The shiregereve lightid adoune,
And went into the Hall,
And fond the lord yfetterid
Full fastè therewithall.
The shireve tho unfetterid
Him rightè sone anon,
And sentin aftir a godè leche
To hele his riggè bon.
Letè we now this falsè knight
Lie in his mochill care,
And tellè we of Gamèlyn,
And lokè how he fare.
Gamèlyn into the wild wode
Ystalkid is full stille;
And Adam le Dispencer at
Ylikid but right ille.
Tho Adam swore to Gamèlyn,
And that be Seint Richere,
Now I say that it is mery
To ben a dispencer;
That muchè levire me werin
The kayis for to bere,
Than walkin in this wildè wode
My clothis all to tere.
Adam, seidè yong Gamèlyn,
Dismayè the right noght,
For many a godè mannis child
In carè is ybrought.

As they thus in the wode ſtodin,
Ytalking both in fere,
Adam herdè talking of men,
And nigh them thought they were.
Tho Gamèlyn undir the wild
Wodè lokid aright,
Full ſevin ſcore of yongè men
He ſaugh right wel ydight;
Allè were ſattè at their mete
In a compas about;
Adam, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Now havin ye no doute,
For aftir balè comith bote,
Thorough Godd'is grete might;
Methinkith of mete and of drink
That I havin a ſight.
Adam le Diſpencer lokid
Tho undir wodè bowe,
And whan that he the metè ſaugh
Tho he was glad inowe;
For now he hopid unto God
For to havin his dele,
And he was full ſore alongid
Aftir a godè mele.
Anon as he ſeide that word
Streight the maiſtir outlawe
Saugh Gamèlyn and Adam both
Undir the wodè ſhaw.

Lo! yongè men, ſeide the maiſtir
Outlaw, by the gode rode
I am aware of ſome geſtis,
Pray God ſendin us gode!
Loke! yondir be two yongè men
That ben right wel adight,
A! peradventure they ben mo,
Whoſo lokid aright.
Ariſeth up quick yongè men,
And ſettè them to me,
For it is gode that we wetin
What meinè that they be.
Up thei ſtertin quik at that word,
Sevin fro the dinnere,
And they mettin with Gamèlyn
And Adam Diſpencere.
Whan that they werin ney to them
Than ſeidè thus that one,
Yeldith up to us, yongè men,
Your bowis and your ſlone.
Than ſeidè to them Gamèlyn,
That yongè was of elde,
Full mochil ſorow mote they have
That unto you ſhall yelde:
I curſè woll none othir wight
But right mine ownè ſelve
Tho ye may fettin unto you
Fyve, and than be ye twelve.

They herdin by his wordis that
Gret might was in his arme,
And forthi there was none of them
That woldè don him harme,
But seidin unto Gamèlyn
Right mildily and still,
Comith aforin our maistir,
And say to him thy will.
Yongè man, seidè Gamèlyn,
Upon your leaute
Tellith what man your maister is
Which that ye with ybe.
Tho allè they anfwerid him
At ones without lesing,
Our maister is ycorounid
Of Outlawis the King.
Adam, seide yongè Gamèlyn,
Go we in Crist's name,
He may nothir metè nor drink
Y wernè us for shame;
And if that he be hendè, and
Comin of gentil blode,
He woll geve us both metè and drink,
And doin us some gode.
By Seintè Jame, seide Adam tho,
What harme so that I gete
I will adventure me to the
Dorè that I had mete.

Tho Gamèlyn and Adam both
Y wentè forth in fere,
And they both gretè the maiſtir
Which that they fondè there.
Than ſeidè to them the maiſtir,
That King was of Outlawes,
What do ye ſeke, ye yongè men,
Undir the wodè ſhawes?
Yong Gamèlyn anſwerid tho
The King with his coroune,
He muſtè nedis walk in wodes
That may not walk in toune.
Sire, we walkè not here in wodes
Non harmè for to do,
But if peradventure we mete
A dere to ſhete thereto,
As meinè that ben right hungry,
And mow no metè fynd,
And very hardè ben beſtad
Undir the wodè lynd.
Of Gamèlyn'is wordis tho
The maiſter haddè routhe,
And ſeidè to them, Ye ſhall have
Inow, have God my trouthe.
Anon he baddè them ſittin
Doune for to takè reſt,
And baddè them etin and drink,
And that too of the beſt.

As they were eting and drinking
Of the beſt wele and fine,
Than ſeide the ton to the tothir
This is yonge Gamèlyne.
Tho was the maiſter of outlawes
Into counſaile nomin,
And told how it was Gamèlyn
That thithir was comin.
Anon as he had herdin all
How that it was befall,
He madè Gamèlyn maiſtir
Undir him o're them all.
Within the third weke aftir this
To him comith tiding,
To the maiſtir of outlawis,
Which that now was their king,
That he ſhuldè ycomin home,
For that his pees was made;
And of that joyfull tiding he
Was wonderouſly glade.
Tho ſeide he to his yongè men,
The ſothè for to tell,
To me be comin tidingis
I may no lengir dwell.
Tho was yong Gamèlyn anon,
Withoutin tarying,
Made maiſtir of outlawis, and
Y corounid their king:

Tho was yong Gamèlyn crounid
The King of the Outlawes,
And among them walkid a while
Undir the wodè shawes.
The falsè knight his brothir now
Was shiregereve and Sire,
And lete his brothir be endite
For hatè and for ire.
Tho werin all his bondmeinè
Sory and nothing glad
Whan that Gamèlyn their lordè
Wolves Hede was cryed and made,
And sentin outè his meinè
Where they mightin him fynd,
For to sekin yonge Gamèlyn
Undir the wodè lynd,
To tellè to him tidingis
The winde was ywent,
And allè his gode revid was,
And all his men yshent.
Whan that they haddè hym foundin
On kneys they them sette,
And adoun with their hodè, and
Gamèlyn their lord grette.
They seiden, Sire, now wrathè not
You for the godè rode,
For we have brought you tidingis,
But they be nothing godè.

Now is thy brothir ſhiregereve,
And he hath the baillie,
And thereto hath enditid the,
And Wolves Hede doth the crie.
Allas! tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
That e're I was ſo ſlak,
That I ne hadd brokin his nek
Whan I his riggè brak.
Goith, and gretith you welè
My houſbondis an wif,
I wollè ben at the next ſhire,
So havè God my lif.
Gamèlyn camè well redy
Unto the nextè ſhire,
And there the falſe knight his brothir
Was bothè Lord and Sire.
Gamèlyn camè boldilich
Into the Motè Hall,
And put adoun his hode among
The lordilingis all.
God ſavè you, Lordilingis!
Which that now herè be;
But as for the, brokebak ſhereve,
Evil motè thou the!
Why haſtè thou doin to me
That ſhame and villonie
For to latin enditè me,
And Wolf'is Hode me crie?

Tho thought the falsè knight on him
For to have ben awreke,
And letè takin Gamèlyn,
Muſt he no more yſpeke.

Mightè there be no mannir grace,
But Gamèlyn at laſt
Was into priſoun ycaſtin,
And fetterid full faſt.

This Gamèlyn hath a brothir
That cleped was Sir Ote;
As gode and hend a knight he was
As mightin gon on fote.

Right anon yede a meſſager
Unto that gode knight,
And toldin him altogethir
How Gamèlyn was dight.

Anon as Sir Ote herdin had
How Gamèlyn was dight,
He was right paſſing ſory tho,
Ne he was nothing light:
And letè ſaddle him a ſtede,
And ſtreit the weie he name,
And unto his tweie bretherin
Right ſonè there he came.

Sir, ſeidè this Sir Ote unto
The ſhiregerevè tho,
We ben but only thre brethren,
Shall we be nevir mo,

And thus haſt thou yprifounid
The beſtè of us all;
Soche anothir brothir as thou
Evil mote him befall!
Sir Ote, ſeidè the falſè knight,
Now letè be thy curs;
By God for theſe thi wordis he
Shallè farin the wors.
Now to the king'is priſoun he
Is lefully ynome,
And there he ſhall abidin
Untill the juſtice come.
But parde, ſeidè Sir Ote tho,
Bettir it ſhall ybe
I biddin him unto maynprife,
And that thou grauntè me,
Untill the nextè ſitting ſhall
Come of deliveraunce,
And than lete Gamèlyn fairely
Yſtondin to his chaunce.
Brothir, in ſoche a forewardè
I takin him to the,
And by thy fadir'is ſoulè,
That the begat and me,
If that he be not right redy
Whan that the juſtice ſitte
Thou ſhaltè berin the judgement,
For all thy grettè witt.

I grauntin it wele, ſeide Sir Ote,
That it ſhall ſo ybe;
Letith delivir him anon,
And takin him to me.
Tho Gamèlyn was delivered
To Sir Ote his brothir,
And that night ydwellid in fere
The ton with the tothir.
On the morow ſeide Gamèlyn
Unto Sir Ote the hend,
My brothir, he ſeidè, forſothe
I motè from the wend,
To lokin how my yongè men
In wode ledin their lif,
And whethir that they livin now
In joie or elles in ſtrif.
Be God, tho anſwerid Sir Ote,
That is a coldè rede,
Now I ſe that alle the cark
Shall fallin on my hede;
For whan that the juſtice ſittith,
And thou be not yfound
I ſhall anon be takin, and
In thy ſtede be ybound.
Brothir, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
Diſmayè the right noght,
For be Seintè Jame in Galis,
That many man hath ſought,

If so that God Almighty hold
Me my lif and my wit
I wullè ben there right redy
Whan that the justice sit.
Than seide Sir Otè to Gamèlyn,
God shieldè the fro shame!
Comith whan that thou seist tyme,
And bring us out of blame.
Now lithinith and leftinith,
And holdith you right still,
And yè shullè herin how that
Gamèlyn had his will.
Anon Gamèlyn went in his
Way undir the wode rise,
And he yfondè there playing
His yongè men of prise.
Tho was this yongè Gamèlyn
In hert right glad inow
Whan that he fond his yongè men
Undir the wodè bow.
Gamèlyn and his yongè men
Ytalkidin in fere,
And they all haddè right gode game
Their maistir for to here.
His men told him of aventures
Which that they had yfound,
And Gamèlyn told them agen
How he was fast ybound.

All the while that Gamèlyn was
Outlaw had he no curs;
There ne was no man that for him
Yferid ought the wors,
But abbotis and priouris,
And monkis, and chanon;
In them forsothe ne laft he noght
Whan er he might them nom.
While Gamèlyn and his yong men
Y madè mirthis ryve,
The faltè knight his own brothir,
Evil motè he thryve!
For all this while he waft about,
Both one day and othir,
On purpoſe for to hirg the queſt
To hangin his brothir.
Gamèlyn ſtodin on a day,
And round him he beheld
The wild wodis and the ſhawis
Within the wildè feld;
He thoughtin upon his brothir,
How that he him behete
That he ywoldin be redy
Whan that the juſtice ſete;
He thoughtin welè that he wolde,
Withoutin more delay,
Y comin afore the juſtice
For to kepin his day;

And ſeidè to his yongè men,
Now dightith you full yare,
For whan that the juſtice ſittith
We mote nedis be there;
For I am undir a borow
Until that I comin,
And my brothir inſtede of me
To priſon ſhall be nomin.
Be Seint Jame, ſeide his yongè men,
And that thou rede thereto,
Ordeinith how it ſhallè be,
And ſo ſhall ſo be do.
While Gamèlyn was yeoming
There that the juſtice ſatt
The falſè knight his own brothir
Forgattin he not that,
To hire the meinè on his queſt
To hangin his brothir,
And though thei haddè not that oon
He wolde han that othir.
Tho comith yongè Gamèlyn
From undir the wode riſe,
And he broughtin along with him
His yongè men of priſe.
I ſe wele, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
The juſtice is yſette;
Go thou aforn us, Adam, and
Lokè how that it ſpette.

Adam wentè into the Hall,
And lokid all about,
And he saugh there ystondè tho
Lordingis grette and stout,
And Sir Ote, Gamèlyn's brothir,
Yfetterid wele fast;
Tho wentin Adam out of Hall
As he werin agast.
Adam seidè to Gamèlyn,
And to his felawes all,
Sir Ote ystondith fetterid
Within the Motè Hall.
Seide Gamèlyn, If God geve us
Gracè wel for to do
He shallin it abegge anon
That him broughtin thereto.
Then seidin Adam Dispencer,
That lokkis haddin hore,
Christ'is curse motè he havin
That boundin him so sore.
And if thou wiltè, Gamèlyn,
Doin aftir my rede,
There is none in the Hallè that
Shall bere aweie his hede.
Adam, tho seidè Gamèlyn,
We wollè not do so:
We woll sle only the giltif,
And lat the othir go.

I will my ſelve into the Hall,
And hire the juſtice ſpeke,
And on all them that ben giltif
I wollè ben awreke.

Lat none eſcapin at the dore,
Take, yongè meinè, yeme,
For I wollè ben the juſtice
This day domis to deme.

Pray God ſpedè me this ilk dai
At this my newè werke!
And Adam, comith thou with me,
For thou ſhalt be my clerke.

His meinè all anſwerid him,
And bad hym don his beſt,
And if thou to us havè nede
Thou ſhalt fyndin us preſt:

For we wollè ſtondin with the
Whilis that we may dure,
And but that we werkin manly
Payith us then no hure.

Yongè men, ſeidè Gamèlyn,
So mot I wele y the,
As ye a right truſty maiſtir
Shullè findin of me.

And rightè thereat the juſtice
Yſattin in the Halle,
In wentè tho yong Gamèlyn
Boldly amonges them all.

Gamèlyn letè unfettir
His brothir out of bend;
Than ſeidè to him Sir Otis,
His brothir that was hende,
Thou haddiſt almoſt, Gamèlyn,
Dwellid away to long,
For the queſtè is ygon out
On me that I ſhulde honge.
Brothir, tho ſeidè Gamèlyn,
God gevè me gode reſt,
This gode day they ſhull ben hongid
That ben upon the queſt;
And thereto the juſtice bothè,
That is the juggè man,
And eke the ſheriff our brothir,
For through him it began.
Than ſeidè yongè Gamèlyn
Unto the falſe juſtice,
Now is thi powir at an end,
You muſt nedis ariſe.
Thou haſt ygevin domis that
Ben evil allè dight;
I wollè ſettin in thi ſete,
And dreſſin them aright.
But the juſtice ſattin ſtillè,
And rooſè not anon,
And Gamèlyn with his ſwerdè
Clevid his chekè bone.

Yonge Gamèlyn toke him in his
Armis, and no more ſpak;
But threw him ovir the barrè,
And his armè to brak.
Durſt no one unto Gamèlyn
Sayè nothing but godè,
For fère of the gret cumpany
That withoutin yſtode.
Gamèlyn ſattè him adoun
In the juſtic'is ſtede,
(Herkenith now of the bourdè
That Gamèlyn tho dede);
And Sir Otè by him he ſatte,
And Adam at his fete.
And whan Gamèlyn the yong was
Satte in the juſtice ſete,
He letè fettè the juſtice
And his falſe brothir,
And letè them come to the barre
The ton with that othir.
Whan Gamèlyn had thus ydone
Haddin he tho no reſt
Till that he had enquerid who
Werin upon the queſt,
For to demin his brothir dere,
Sir Ote, for to be honge,
Er that he wiſte which they were
It thoughte him full longe.

But al so sone as Gamèlyn
Wiste where that thei were
He didde them everichone
Fetterin fait in fere,
And bringè them unto the barre,
And settè them in vewe:
By my faith, seidè the justice,
The sheriff is a shrewe.
Than seidè yongè Gamèlyn
Unto the false justice,
Thou hastè gevè thy domis
Al of the worst assise;
And the twelve sifouris that
Werin of the inquest
They shulle ben hongid this day,
So God geve me gode rest.
Than seide the sheriff pitously
To yongè Gamèlyn,
My Lord, I crie the mercie,
Brothir artè thou myn.
Therefore, seidè yongè Gamèlyn,
Havè you Crist'is curse,
For if thou werin maistir yet
Shuldin I farè worse.
But for to makè short my Tale,
And not to tary longe,
He ordeynid him there a queste
Of his own men so strong.

The falſe juſtice and the ſheriff
Bothè were hongid hie,
To weyvin there with the ropis,
And with the winde drie.
And als the twelvè ſiſouris,
Sorow havè that rekk,
Allè they werin yhongid
Full faſtè by the nekk.
Thus endid hath the falſè knight
With all his trechèrie,
That evir haddè lad his life
In falſeneſs and folie.
He was hongid up by the nek,
And nought by the purſe,
That was the mede that he had haddè
From his fadir'is curſe.
Sir Ote was the eldiſt tho,
And Gamèlyn was yonge,
They wentin with their frendis, and
Paſſidin to the king.
They madin pece with the kingè
Of the beſtè aſſiſe;
The king lovid Sir Otè wele,
And made him a juſtice.
Aftir the king made Gamèlyn,
Bothè in eſt and weſt,
The chefe juſtice and ridere of
Allè his ſre foreſt.

Alle his wight yonge men the king
Forgafin them their gilt,
And sithen in goule office the king
Hath allè them ypilt.

Thus has wan yongè Gamelyn
His londè and his ledè,
And wrake of him his enemies,
And quytè them their mede.

And Sir Otè, his brothir dere,
Ymade him hath his heir,
And sithin wedded Gamelyn
A wife both gode and faire.

They lividin rogidin wele
Whilis that Christè wolde,
And sithin that was Gamelyn
Ygravin undir molde.

And so shallè we allè here,
May there no man yflee
God bringin us unto the joie
That evir shall ybe!

Thus endith the legend of Gamelyn, called The Coke's Tale in all the mss. that I have seen and have this Tale.

HERE BEGINNETH

THE PLOWMAN'S PROLOGUE.

The Plowman pluckid up his plowe
Whan midſomer mone was comen' in,
And ſaied his beſtes ſhould ete inowe,
And lige in graſſe up to the chin:
Thei ben feble both oxe and cowe, 1945†
Of hem n'is left but bone and ſkinne;
He ſhoke of ſhere, and coulter' off drowe,
And honged his harnis on a pinne.

He toke his tabarde and ſtaffe eke,
And on his hedde he ſet his hat, 1950
And ſaied he would Saint Thomas ſeke.
On pilgrimage he goth forth plat;
In ſcrippe he bare bothe bred and lekes;
He was forſwonke and all forſwat:
Men might have ſene through both his chekes, 1955
And every wang tothe where it ſat.

The Plowman's Prologue] This and the Tale is in none of the mſſ. that I have ſeen, nor in any of the firſt printed books. Caxton and Pynſent, I preſume, durſt not publiſh it; the former printed this poet's Works in Weſtminſter abbey, and both before the abolition of Popery; and the mſſ. being before that, I fancy the ſcriveners were prohibited tranſcribing it, and injoyned to ſubſcribe an inſtrument at the end of The Canterbury Tales called his *Retraction*: ſo that if this Tale had not been carefully collected and preſerved in Maſter Stowe's library, as the editor of Iſlip's 1602 book ſays he has ſeen it in a hand of near to Chaucer's time for antiquity, in all likelihood it had been loſt. *Urry.*

† From this line to the end of the Work the verſes are numbered according to Urry's edit. of 1721, on account of the various references to that edit. in the Notes and Gloſſary to this edit. of 1782.

Our Hoſte behelde well all about,
And ſawe this man was ſunne ibrent;
He knewe well by his ſingid ſnout,
And by his clothes, that were to rent,
He was a man wont walke about,
He n'as not aye in cloiſter pent,
Ne couthe religiouſliche lout,
And therefore was he full ill ſhent.

Our Hoſte him axed, What man art thou?
Sire Hoſte, (quod he) I am an hine,
For I am wont to go to plow,
And erne my mete yer that I dine:
To ſwette and ſwinke I make avowe,
My wife and babes therewith to finde,
And ſervin God and I wiſt how,
But we leude men yben full blinde:

For clerkes ſaie we ſhullin be ſain
For ther livelod to ſwette and ſwinke,
And thei right nought us give again
Neither to ete ne yet to drinke;
Thei mowe by lawe, as that thei ſain,
Us curſe and dampne to hell'is brinke;
And thus thei puttin us to pain
With candlis queint and beil'is clinke.

Thei make us thrallis at ther luſt,
And ſain we mowe not els be ſaved;
Thei have the corne and we the duſt;
Who gainſayes them they ſaye he raved.
What, man! (quod our Hoſte) canſt thou preche?
Come nere and tel ſome holy thing.

Sir, quod he, I herd onis techo
A preeſt in pulpit gode preching.
Saie on, quod he, I the beſtche.
Sir, I am redy at your bidding.
I praie that no man me reproche,
While that I am my Tale telling.

Thus endeth the Prologue.

HERE FOLOWETH

THE FIRST PART OF THE TALE.

A Full ſterne ſtrief is ſtirid newe,
In many ſtedis in a ſtounde,
Of ſandry ſedis thut ben ſewe;
It ſemith that ſome ben unſounde,
For ſome be grete growin on grounde,
Some ben ſouble, ſimple and ſmall:
Whether of 'hem is falſir founde
The falſir foule mote him bifall.

That one ſide is that I of tell
Popis, cardinals, and prelates,
Parſons, monkis, and freris fell,
Priours, abbotes, of grete eſtates;
Of heven and hell thei kepe the yeates,
And Peter's ſucceſſours ben all,
And this is demid by old dates;
But falſhed foule mote it befall.

The Plowman's Tale] A complaint againſt the pride and covetouſneſs of the clergy, made no doubt by Chaucer, ſays the editor of Chaucer's Works printed for *Ad. Iſlip* at *London*, *A.D.* 1602. *Urry*.

The othir ſide ben pore and pale,
And peple yput out of preſe,
And ſemin caitiffes ſore a cale,
And er in one without encreſe
Iclepid Lollers and Londleſe;
Who toteth on 'hem thei ben untall;
Thei ben arayid all for pece,
But falſhed foule mote it befall.

Many a countrey have I fought
To knowe the falſir of theſe two,
But aye my travaile was for nought
All ſo ferre as I have ygo,
But as I wandrid in a wro,
Within a wode beſide a wall,
Two foulis ſawe I ſitting tho,
The falſir foule mote him befall.

That one did plete on the Pope's ſide,
A Griffon of a grimme ſtature;
A Pellicane withoutin pride
To theſe Lollers ylaied his lure;
He muſed his mattir in meſure
To counſaile, Chriſt ay gan he call;
The Griffon ſhewed as ſharpe as fire,
But falſhed foule mote it befall.

The Pellicane began to preche
Bothe of mercie and of mekeneſſe,
And ſaied that Chriſt ſo gan us teche,
And meke and merciable gan bleſſe:

The' Evangely berith witneſſe
A lambe he likeneth Chriſt ovre' all,
In tokening that he mekiſt was
Sith pride was out of hevin fall.
And ſo ſhould every Chriſtened be,
Prieſtis and Peter's ſucceſſours,
Beth lowliche and of lowe degre,
And uſin none yerthly honours,
Ne croune ne curious covertours,
Ne pilloure ne othir proude pall,
Ne to cofrin up grete treſours,
For falſhed foule mote it befall.
Prieſtis ſhould for no cattill plede,
But chaſtin 'hem in charite,
Ne to no battaile ſhould men lede
For inhaunſing ther owne degre,
Nat willin ſittinges in hie ſe,
No ſoverainte in hous ne hall,
Worldly worſhip defie and fle;
Who willeth highnes foule ſhall fall.
Alas! who maie ſoche ſainctis call
That wilnith welde yerthly honour?
Lowe as Lucifere ſoche ſhall fall,
In balefull blackneſſe build ther boure
That eggith peple to erroure,
And makith them unto 'hem thrall;
To Chriſt I holde ſoche one traitour;
Lowe as Lucifer ſoche ſhall fall,

That willith to be kingis peres,
And higher than the Emperour,
And ſome that werin but pore freres
Now wollin waxe a warriour;
God ne is not ther governour
That holdith none his permagall,
While cove'tiſe is ther counſailour;
All ſoche falſhede mote nedis fall,
That hie on horſe willith to ride
In glitterande golde of grete araie,
Paintid and portrid all in pride,
No common knight maie go ſo gaie,
Chaunge of clothing every daie,
With goldin girdils grete and ſmall,
As boiſtous as is bere at baie;
All ſoche falſhed mote nedis fall.
With pride puniſhith thei the pore,
And ſome one thei ſuſtain with ſale,
Of holie churche makith an hore,
And fill ther wombe with wine and ale;
With money fille thei many a male,
And chaffrin churchis when thei fall,
And telle the peple a leude tale;
Soche falſe faitours foule 'hem befall.
Thei fede of many manir metes,
With ſong and ſolas ſitting long,
And filleth ther wombe, and faſt fretes,
And from the mete unto the gong,

And aftir mete with harpe and ſong,
And eche man mote 'hem Lordis call,
And hote ſpicis evir emong;
Soche falſe faitours foule 'hem befall.
Miters thei werin mo than two
Iperlid as the quen'is hedde,
A ſtaffe of golde, and pirrie lo!
As hevie as' it were made of ledde;
With clothe of gold bothe newe and redde,
With glitterande gold as grene as gall,
By dome thei dampne men to be dedde;
All ſoche faitours foule 'hem befall.
And Chriſt'is peple proudly curſe
With brodè boke and braying bell,
And to put pennies in ther purſe
Thei woll ſell bothe hevin and hell:
In ther ſentence and thou wilt dwell
Thei willin geſſe in ther gaie hall,
And though the ſoth thou of 'hem tell
In the grete curſing ſhalt thou fall.
That is ybleſſid that thei bleſſe,
And curſid that thei curſin woll,
And thus the peple thei oppreſſe,
And have ther lordſhippis at full:
And many be marchauntes of woll,
And to purs pennies woll come thrall,
The pore peple thei al to pull;
Suche falſe faitours foule 'hem befall.

Lordis alſo mote to 'hem loute,
Obeyſaunt to ther brode bleſſing,
Thei ridin with ther royal route
On a courſir as' it were a king,
With ſadle of golde glittering,
With curious harneis quaintly crallit,
Stiroppis gaie of golde maſtling;
All ſuche falſhed foule may befal it.
Chriſtes Miniſters clepid thei bene,
And rulin al in robberie,
But Antichriſte thei ſervin clene,
Attirid al in tirannie,
Witneſſe of John his prophecie;
Antichriſte is ther admirall,
Tiffelers attired in trecherie;
Al ſuche faitours foule 'hem befall.
Who ſaith that ſome of 'hem may ſinne
He ſhal be domid to be ded;
Some of 'hem wollin gladly winne
Al ayenſt that whiche God forbed.
Al Holieſt they clepe ther hed,
That of ther rule is full regall;
Alas that evir thei ete bred!
For al ſuch falſhed wol foule fall.
Ther hed covitith al honour,
To be worſhipped in worde and dede,
Kingis mote to him knele and coure,
To the' apoſtles that Chriſt forbede:

To Popis heſte ſuch take more hede
Than to kepe Chriſtes commaundement,
Of gold and ſilvir ben ther wede,
Thei holde him hole omnipotent.
He ordaineth by his ordinaunce
To pariſhe prieſtis a powere,
To' anothir a gretir avaunce,
A gretir point to his miſtere;
But for he' is highiſt in erth here
To him reſerveth he many' a point,
But unto Chriſt, that hath no pere,
Reſervith he no pin no joynt.
So ſemith he abovin all,
And Chriſt abovin him nothinge,
Whan that he ſittith in his ſtall
Dampnith and ſavith as him thinke;
Suche pride tofore hie God doth ſtinke:
An angel bad John to' him not knele,
Only to God do his bowinge;
Soche worſhip-willers mote ill fele.
Thei ne clepe Chriſt but *Sanctus Deus*,
And clepe ther hed *Sanctiſſimus*;
All they that ſuche a ſecte ſewis
I trowe thei taken 'hem amiſſe:
In erth here they havin ther bliſſe,
Ther hie maſtir is Beliall;
Chriſt his pore peple from 'hem wiſſe,
For al ſuche falſe will foule befall.

They mowin both ybinde and loſe,
And all is for ther holy life;
To ſave or dampne they mowen choſe;
Betwene 'hem now is a grete ſtrife;
Many' a man is killed with a knife
To wete which havin lordſhip ſhall;
For ſuche Chriſt ſuffrid woundis five,
For all ſuche falſhed will foule fall.
Chriſt ſaid, *Qui gladio percutit*
With ſwerdè ſurely he ſhall die;
He bad his prieſtis pece and grith,
And bad 'hem not drede for to die,
And bad them be both ſimple' and ſlie,
And carkè not for no cattell,
And truſte on God that ſitteth on hie,
For al falſe ſhal full foule befall.
Theſe wollin makè men to ſwere
Ayenſt Chriſt'is commaundèment,
And Chriſt'is members al to tere,
On rode as he were newe yrent;
Suche lawes thei maken by aſſent,
Eche on it throwith as a ball,
And thus the pore be fully ſhent,
But falſhed foule it ſhulle befall.
Ne uſin thei no ſimonie,
But ſelle churchis and priories,
Ne they uſin to none envie,
But curſin al 'hem contraries,

And hirith men by daies and yeres
With ſtrength to hold 'hem in ther ſtall,
And culle all ther adverſaries,
Therfore falſhed foule thou them fall.
With purſe they purchaſe perſonage,
With purſe thei payin 'hem to plede,
And men of warre thei wollin wage
To bring ther enemies to dede,
And lordis livis they wol lede,
And muchil take, and give but ſmall,
But he' it ſo get from it ſhal ſhede,
And make ſuche falſe right foule yfall.
They halowe nothing but for hire,
Ne churche, ne font, ne veſtiment,
And make orders in every ſhire,
But prieſtis pay for the parchment:
Of riatours they taken rent,
Therwith they ſmere the ſhep'is ſkall,
For many churches ben ſuſpent;
All ſuche falſhed foule it befall.
Some livith not in lecherie,
But haunte wenchis, widows, and wives,
And puniſh the pore for putre,
Themſelfe it uſeth al ther lives;
And but a man to them him ſhrives
To hevin come he nevir ſhall,
He ſhal be curſed as be catives;
To hel thei ſaine that he ſhal fall.

There was more mercy' in Maximine,
And Nero, that never was gode,
Than there is now in some of them
Whan he hath on his furrid hode;
They folowe Christ that shede his blode
To heven, as bucket to the wall;
Suche wrechis yben worse than wode,
And al suche faitours foule 'hem fall.

They give ther almis to the riche,
To mainteynours and men of lawe,
For to lordis they wol be liche,
An harlottes sonne not worth an hawe;
Sothfastnesse allè suche han slawe;
They kembe ther crokettes with cristall,
And drede of God they have doune drawe;
Al suche faitours foule 'hem befall.

They make parsons for the pennie,
And canons and their cardinals;
Unnethe amongst 'hem al is any
That ne hath glosed the gospel fals,
For Christ made ner no cathedrals,
Ne with him was no cardinall
With a redde hatte, as use minstrals;
But falshed foule mote it befall.

Ther tithing and ther offring bothe
They clemith by possession,
Ne therof n'il they none forgo,
But robbin men as a raunsome:

The tithing of *turpe lucrum*
With theſe maiſters is veniall;
Tithinge of bribry and larſon
Will make falſhed full foule to fall.
They takin to ferme ther ſompnours
To harme the peple what they may,
To pardoners and falſe faitours
Thei ſell ther ſeles I dare well ſay,
And all to holdin gret arraie,
To multiplie 'hem more metall,
They drede ful litel dom'is day,
Whan al ſuche falſhed ſhal foule fall.
Suche harlottes ſhul men diſclaunder,
For that they ſhullin make them gre,
And ben as proud as Alexander,
And ſain to the pore Wo be ye!
By yere eche prieſt ſhal paie his fe
For to encreſe his lemmans call;
Suche herdis ſhul wel ivil the,
And al ſuche falſe ſhal foule befall.
And if a man be falſely famed,
And wol ymake purgacioun,
Than wol the' officers be agramed,
And aſſign him fro toun to toun;
So nede he muſt payin raunſome,
Though he be clene as is chriſtall,
And than have an abſolution;
But al ſuche falſe ſhal foule befall.

Though he be giltie of the dede,
And that he may the money paie,
Al the while his purſe wol yblede
He may uſe it fro day to day.
The biſhopes officers gone gay,
And this game they uſe ovir all,
The pore to pil is al their pray;
But al ſuche falſe ſhul foule befall.

Alas! God ordained no ſuche lawe,
Ne no ſuche crafte of covetiſe,
But he forbad it by his lawe;
Suche rulers mowen of God agriſe,
For al his rulis ben rightwiſe:
Theſe newe pointis ben pure papall,
And Godd'is lawe they all diſpice,
And al ſuche faitours ſhul foule fall.

They ſaine that Peter had the key
Of heven and hel, to have and holde;
I trowe Peter toke no money
For no ſinnis that he yſolde:
Suche ſucceſſours yben to bolde,
In winning all ther witte they wral,
Ther conſcience is waxin colde,
And al ſuche faitours foul 'hem fal.

Peter was ner ſo grete a fole
To leve his key with ſuche a lorell,
Or take ſuche curſid ſoc or tole,
He was adviſid nothing well;

I trowe they have the key of hell,
Their maiſtir is of that marſhall,
For there thei dreſſin 'hem to dwell,
And with falſe Lucifer to fall.
Thei ben as proude as Lucifarre,
As angry and as envious;
From a gode faith they ben ful farre;
In cove'tiſe they ben curious;
To catche catil as covitous
As hounde that for hungre wol yall,
Ungodly and ungracious;
And nedely ſuche falſe ſhal foule fall.
The Pope, and he were Peter's heire,
Me thinke he errith in this caſe,
Whan choiſe of biſhop's in diſpaire
To choſin 'hem in divers place,
A lorde ſhal write to him for grace,
For his clerke anone pray he ſhall,
So ſhal he ſpedin his purchaſe;
And al ſuche falſe foule 'hem befall.
Although he can ne manir gode
A lord'is prayir ſhal be ſpedde,
Though he be wilde of wil or wode,
Nat underſtanding what min redde,
A leude boſtir, that God forbedde,
As gode a biſhoppe' is my horſe Ball;
Suche a Pope is full foule beſtede,
And at the laſte wol foule yfall.

He makith prieſtes for erthly thanke,
And not at all for Chriſt'is ſake;
Suche that yben ful fat and ranke,
To ſoul'is hele none hede they take;
Al is wel done what er they make,
For they ſhal anſwere ones for all;
For world'is thank ſuch worch and wake,
And al ſuche falſe ſhal foule befall.

Suche that can nat yſay ther crede
With prayir ſhul be made prelates,
Nothir canne thei the goſpell rede,
Suche ſhul now weldin hie eſtates;
The hie godes frendſhip 'hem makes,
Thei totith on ther ſumme totall;
Suche bere the keyes of hell'is yates,
And all ſuche falſe ſhal foule befall.

Thei forſakin for Chriſt'is love
Travaile, and hungre, thurſte, and colde;
They ben ordrid or al above
Out of youthed til they ben olde;
By the' dore they go nat to the folde,
To helpe ther ſhepe they nought traval,
For hirid men al ſuche I holde,
And al ſuche falſe foule 'hem befall.

For Chriſt our King thei wol forſake,
And knowe him nought for his poverte,
For Chriſt'is love they wol awake,
And drinke piement al aperte:

Of God they ſeme nothing aferde,
As luſty live as Lamual,
And drive ther ſhepe into deſert;
Al ſuche falſe faitours ſhul foule fal.
Chriſt yhad xii apoſtles here,
Nowe ſay they There may be but one
That may not erre in no manere,
Who leve not this ben loſt echone:
Peter errid, ſo did not John;
Why is he cleped the Principall?
Chriſte cleped him Peter, not the Stone;
Al falſe faitours foule 'hem befal.
Why curſin they the croiſery
Chriſt'is Chriſtian creturis?
For bytwene them is now envy
To be enhaunſid in honours;
Chriſtin livers with ther labours,
For they levin on no mortal,
Ben do to deth with diſhonours,
And al ſuche falſe foule 'hem befal.
What knoweth a tilloure at the plowe
The Pop'is name, and what he hate?
His crede ſuffiſeth to' him inowe,
And knoweth a cardi'nal by his hatte.
Rough is the pore unrightly latte,
That knowith Chriſt his God royal;
Suche maters be not worth a gnatte,
But ſuche falſe faitours foule 'hem fal.

A king ſhal knele and kiſſe his ſhowe,
Chriſt let a ſinful kiſſe his fete,
Me thinke he holdeth him hie inowe,
So Lucifer did, that hie ſet:
Suche one me thinke himſelfe foryet,
Or to the trouth he was nat cal:
Chriſte that ſuffirid woundis wete,
Shall make all ſuche falſhed foule fall.
They layith out ther largè nettes
For to takin ſilvir and golde,
Thei fillin coffers, and ſackes fettes
There as they ſoulis catchin ſholde;
Ther ſervauntes be to them unholde,
But they can doublin ther rentall;
To bigge 'hem caſtles bigge 'hem holde;
And al ſuche falſe foule 'hem befall.

Here endeth the firſt parte of this Tale, and hereafter foloweth the ſeconde parte.

To accorde what this wordè fall
No more Engliſhe ne can I finde,
Shewin anothir nowe I ſhall,
For I have moche to ſaye behinde,
How prieſtis han the peple pinde,
As curteis Chriſte yhath me kinde,
And put this matter in my minde,
To make this manir men amende.

Shortely to ſhende 'hem, and ſhewe nowe
How wrongfully they werche and walke,
Of hie God nothing tell, ne howe,
But in Goddes worde tell many a balke,
In harnis holde 'hem and in halke,
And prechen' of tithis and offrende,
And untruely of the goſpel talke;
For his mercy God it amende!

What els is Antichriſte to ſaie
But even Chriſt'is adverſarie?
Suche hath now ben many a daie
To Chriſt'is bidding ful contrarie,
That from the trouthe clene ywarry;
Out of the way they ben ywende,
And Chriſt'is peple' untruely cary;
God for his pitie it amende!

They live contrary to Chriſtes liſe,
In hie pride againſt mekèneſſe,
Againſt ſuffraunce they uſin ſtriſe,
And angre ayenſt ſobreneſſe,
Ayeniſt wiſedom wilfulneſſe;
To Chriſt'is talis litil tende,
Againſt meſure outragiouſneſſe;
But whan God wol it may amende.

Lordely liſe ayenſt lowlineſſe,
And demin al without mercy,
And covetiſe ayenſte largeſſe,
Ayeniſt trouthe trechery,

And ayeniſt almeſſe envy;
Ayeniſt Chriſt they comprehende,
For chaſtite mainteine leche'ry;
God for his gracè this amende!
Againſt penaunce thei uſe delightes,
Ayenſt ſuffraunce ſtrong defence,
Ayenſt God they uſin ill rightes,
Ayeniſt pitie puniſhmentes,
Open' evil ayenſt continence;
Ther wickid winning worſe diſpende,
Sobirneſſe ſette in to diſpence;
God for his godeneſſe it amende!
Why cleimin they holy' his powere,
And wranglin ayenſt al his heſtes?
His living folowe thei nought here,
But livin worſe than witleſſe beſtes:
Of fiſhe and fleſhe they lovin feſtes;
As lordis thei ben brode ikende;
Of Godd'is pore thei hatin geſtes;
God for his mercy this amende!
With Dives ſuche ſhal have ther dome,
That ſaine that they be Chriſt'is frendes,
And do nothing as they ſhould done,
Al ſuche ben falſir than ben fendes:
On the peple they ley ſuche bendes
As God in erth they han offende;
Succour for ſuch Chriſte now ſend us,
And for his mercy this amende!

A token' of Antichriſt they be;
His careckes ben now wide iknowe,
Receved to preche ſhal no man be
Without tokin of him I trowe:
Eche Chriſtin prieſt to prechin owe,
From God above thei ben yſende
Goddes word to al folke for to ſhowe,
And ſinful man for to amende.

Chriſt ſent the porè for to preche,
The royal riche he did not ſo,
Now dare no pore the peple teche,
For Antichriſt is al ther foe;
Among the peple he mote go,
He hath biddin al ſuche ſuſpende,
Some hath he hent, and thinketh yet mo;
But al this God may wel amende.

Al tho that han the worlde forſake,
And livin lowly, as God badde,
Into ther priſon ſhulle be take,
Betin and boundin, and forth ladde:
Hereof I rede no man be dradde,
Chriſt ſaid that his ſhould be yſhende;
Eche man ought hereof to be gladde,
For God ful wel it wol amende.

They take on 'hem royall power,
And ſay they havin ſwerdis two,
One curſe to hel, one ſle men here:
At his taking Chriſt had no mo,

Yet Peter had but one of tho,
And Chriſt to him ſmite gan defende,
And into the' ſheth badde put it tho;
And al ſuche miſcheves God amende!
Chriſt bad Peter to kepe his ſhepe,
And with his ſworde forbade' hem ſmite;
Swerde is no tole with ſhepe to kepe,
But to ſhepherdes that ſhepe wol bite;
Me thinke ſuche ſhepherdes ben to wite
Who'ayen ther ſhepe with ſwerde contende;
They drive ther ſhepe with grete diſpite;
But al this God may well amende.
Peter's ſucceſſoures be thei nought
Whom Chriſt ymade his chefe paſtoure;
A ſwerde no ſhepherde uſin ought
But he would ſle as a bochoure:
Who ſo were Peter's ſucceſſoure
Should bere his ſhepe til his backe bende,
And ſhadowe 'hem from every ſhoure;
And al this God may wel amende.
Succeſſours to Peter ben theſe
In that, that Peter Chriſte forſoke,
That levir had God's love to leſe
Than ſhepherde had to leſe his hoke;
He culleth the ſhepe as doth the coke;
Of 'hem takin they woll untrende,
And falſely gloſe the Goſpell boke;
God for his mercy them amende!

Whan Chriſt had take Peter the kay
Chriſt ſaide he muſt ydie for man;
That Peter to Chriſt gan withſay,
Chriſte bad him Go behinde, Sathan:
Suche counſailours many' of theſe han,
For world'is wele God to offende;
Peter's ſucceſſours they ben than;
But al ſuche God may wel amende.
For Sathan is to ſay no more
But he that contrary to Chriſt is,
In this they lernin Peter's lore,
They ſewin him whan he did miſſe;
They folowe him forſoth in this
That Chriſt would Peter reprehende,
But nat that longith to' hevin bliſſe;
God for his mercy 'hem amende!
Thei none apoſtle ſewen, in caſe
Of ought that I can underſtonde,
But him that betraied Chriſt, Judas,
That bare the purſe in every londe,
And al that he might ſette on honde
He hidde and ſtale, and it miſpende:
His rule theſe traitours han in honde;
Almighty God all ſuche amende!
And at the laſt his lorde gan tray
Curſidly through falſe covetie,
So would theſe traine him for money
And they ywiſtin in what wiſe;

They be ſikre' of the fele enſiſe.
From all ſothneſſe they ben yfrende,
And covetiſe chaunge with quentiſe;
Almighty God al ſuche amende!
Were Chriſt upon erth, here eſte ſone,
Theſe wouldin dampnē him to die;
All his heſtis they han ſordone,
And ſaine his ſawes ben hereſie;
Ayenſt his commaundementes they crie,
And dampnin all his to be brende,
For thei ne like ſuche loſengrie;
God Almighty all ſuche amende!
Theſe han more might in Englande here
Than hath the king and all his lawe,
They han purchaſid ſuche powere
To takin 'hem whom liſt not knawe,
And ſay that hereſie' is ther ſawe,
And ſo to priſon wol 'hem ſende;
It was not ſo by eldir dawe;
God for his mercy it amende!
The king'is lawe wol no man deme
Angerliche withoutin anſwere,
But if any man theſe miſqueme
He ſhall be baightid as a bere,
And yet wel worſe they wol him tere,
And in priſon wollin him pende
In ginis, and in othir gere;
When that God woll it may amende.

The king ne taxith nat his men
But by assent of the commi'nalte,
But these eche yere wol raunsom 'hem
Maistirfully, more than dothe he:
Ther selis by yere bettir be
Than is the king'is in extende,
Ther officers han gretir se;
But alle this mischefe God amende!
Who so wol prove a testament
That is nat al worth tennè pounde,
He shal paye for the parchèment
The thirde of the money all rounde;
Thus the pore peple is ransounde,
They say suche parte t'em should apende,
There as they gripen' it goeth to grounde;
God for his mercy it amende!
A simple fornication
Twenty shillingis he shall pay,
And than have absolucion
And al the yere use it he may:
Thus thei lettin 'hem go astray;
Thei recke nat though the soule be brende;
These kepin evill Peter's kay;
And al suche shepherdes God amende!
Wondir is that the parliamente,
And al the lordis of this londe,
Here to takin so lite entente
To helpe the peple' out of ther honde,

For thei ben hardir in ther bonde,
Worſe bete, and cruellir ybrende,
Than to the king is underſtand;
God him helpe this for to amende!
What biſhoppes, what religions,
Han in this lande as muche lay fe,
Lordeſhippis and poſſeſſions,
More than lordis it ſemith me;
That makith 'hem leſe charite:
They mowin not to God attende,
In erth thei have ſo highe degre;
God for his mercy it amende!
The Empe'rour yafe the Pope ſomtime
So highè lordeſhip him about,
That at the laſt the ſely kime
The proudè Pope yput him out,
So of this relme is in grete dout;
But, Lordes, beware, and them defende,
For nowe theſe folke be wondir ſtoute;
The king and lords now this amende.

Thus endeth the ſeconde parte of this Tale, and hereafter foloweth the thirde.

Moyses lawe forbode it tho
That preſtis ſhould no lordſhippes welde,
Chriſt'is goſpell biddith alſo
That they ſhould no lordſhippis helde;
Chriſtes apoſtels were ner ſo bolde,
No ſuche lordſhippes to 'hem enbrace,

But ſklere ther ſhepe and kepe ther folde;
May God amende 'hem for his grace!
For thei ne ben but counterfete,
Men may yknow 'hem by ther fruite,
Ther greteneſſe maketh 'hem God foryete,
And take his mekeneſſe in diſpite;
And thei were pore and had but lite
Thei n'old nat demen' aftir the face,
Noriſhe ther ſhepe, and 'hem nat bite;
May God amende 'hem for his grace!

Griffon.

What canſt thou preche ayenſt chanons
That men yclepin Seculere?

Pellican.

Thei ben curates of many tounes,
On yerth they havin grete powere,
They have grete prebendis and dere,
Some two or thre, and ſome have mo,
A parſonage to ben playing fere,
And yet thei ſerve the king alſo,
And let to fermè all that fare
To whom that wol moſte give therfore,
Some wollin ſpende, and ſome woll ſpare,
And ſome wol laye it up in ſtore;
A cure of ſoule they care not fore,
So that they mowin money take;
Whethir ther ſoules be wonne or lore
Ther profites they woll not forſake.

They have a gedering procuratour,
That can the pore peple enplede,
And robbe 'hem as a ravinour,
And to his lorde the mony lede,
And catche of quicke and eke of dede,
And richin him and his lorde eke,
And to robbe the pore give gode rede
Of olde and yonge, of hole and ficke.
Therwith they purchaſe 'hem lay ſe
In londe, there as 'hem likith beſt,
And buildin brode as a cite
Both in the eſt and in the weſt;
To purchaſe thus they ben ful preſt,
But on the pore they woll nought ſpende,
Ne no gode give to Godd'is geſt,
Ne ſende him ſome that all hath ſende.
By ther ſervice ſoche wollin live,
And truſt that othir to treſure;
Though all ther pariſhe die unſhrive
Thei woll nat givin a roſe floure;
Ther life ſhould be as a mirrour
Both to lerid and leude alſo,
And teche the folke ther lele labour;
Soche miſter men ben all miſgo.
Some of 'hem yben full harde nigges,
And ſome of 'hem ben proude and gaie,
Some ſpendin ther gode upon gigges,
And findin 'hem of grete araie.

Alas! what thinke theſe men to ſaie
That thus diſpendin Godd'is gode?
At the grete dredefull dom'is daie
Soche wretchis ſhull be worſe than wode.
Some ther churchis nevir ne ſie,
Ne ner o penie thidir ſende;
Though that the pore for hungir die,
O penie' on 'hem will thei not ſpende:
Have thei receiving of the rente
Thei recke ner of the remènaunt;
Alas! the devill hath clene 'hem blente;
Soche one is Sathanes ſojournaunt.
And uſe horedome and harlottrie,
And covetiſe, and pompe, and pride,
And ſlothe, and wrathe, and eke envie,
And ſewin ſinne by every ſide;
Alas! where thinkin ſoche t' abide?
How woll thei ther accomptis yeld?
From hie God thei mowe 'hem not hide;
Soche willers witte' is not worth a nelde.
Thei ben ſo rotid in richeſſe
That Chriſt'is povert is foryet;
Yſervid with ſo many meſſe
Hem thinke that manna is no mete:
All is gode that thei mowin gete;
Thei wene to livin evirmore;
But whan that God at dome is ſete
Soche treſour is a feble ſtore.

Unnethis mote thei matins saie
For counting and for courtholding,
And yet he jangilith as jaie,
And underſtont himſelf nothing;
He woll yſerve bothe erle and king
For his finding and for his ſe,
And hide his tithing and offring;
This is a ſeble charite.

Othir thei ben proude or cove'tous,
Or elles thei ben hard or hungrie,
Or thei ben libe'rall or lecherous,
Or els medlers with marchandrie,
Mainteiners of men with maiſtrie,
Or ſtewardes, countours, or pledours,
And ſerve God in ypocriſie;
Soche prieſtis ben Chriſtes falſe traitours.

Thei ben falſe, thei ben vengeable,
And begile men in Chriſt'is name;
Thei ben unſtedfaſt and unſtable;
To traie ther Lorde 'hem thinke no ſhame;
To ſervin God thei ben full lame;
Godd'is thevis, and falſely ſtele,
And falſely Godd'is worde defame;
In winning is ther world'is wele.

Antichriſt theſe prieſtis ſerve all,
I praie the who maie ſayin Naie?
With Antichriſt ſoche ſhullin fall,
Thei folowen him in dede and faie;

Thei ſervin him in riche arate,
To ſervin Chriſt ſoche falſely fain;
Why at the dredfull dom'is daie
Shull thei not folowe him to pain?
That knowen 'hem ſelf that thei doen ill
Ayenſt Chriſt'is commaundement,
And amende 'hem ner ne will,
But ſerve Sathan by one aſſent.
Who ſayith ſothe he ſhall be ſhent,
Or ſpeketh ayenſt ther falſe living,
Who ſo well livith ſhall be brent,
For ſoche ben gretir than the king.
Popis, biſhops, and cardinals,
Chanons, and parſons, and vicare,
In Goddes ſervice I trowe ben fals
That ſacramentis ſellin here,
And ben as proude as Luciſere:
Eche man loke whethir that I lie;
Who ſo ſpekith ayenſt ther powere
It ſhall be holdin hereſie.
Lokith how many orders take
Onely of Chriſt for his ſervice,
That the world'is godis forſake;
Who ſo take ordirs othir wiſe
I trowe that thei ſhall ſore agriſe,
For all the gloſe that thei conne,
All ne ſewin not this aſſiſe;
In evill time thei thus begonne.

Loke how many emong hem all
Ne holdin not this hiè waie
With Antichriſt thei ſhullin fall,
For that thei wollin God betraie:
God amende 'hem, that beſt ymaie!
For many men thei makin ſhendè;
Thei wetin well the ſothe I ſaie,
But the devill hath foule 'hem blende.
Some of 'hem on ther churchis dwell
Apparailled porely; proude of porte;
The ſeven ſacramentes thei doen fell;
In cattell catching' is ther comfort:
Of eche mattir thei wollin mell;
To doen 'hem wrong is ther diſport;
To' afraie the peple thei ben fell,
And hold 'hem lower than doeth the lorde.
And for the tithing of a ducke,
Or of an apple or an aie,
Thei make men ſwere upon a boke;
Lo! thus thei foulin Chriſt'is ſaie:
Soche berin evill hevin kaie;
Thei mowin aſſoile, thei mowe ſhrive,
With mennis wivis ſtrongly plaie,
And with true tillers ſturte and ſtrive,
At the wreſtling and at the wake,
And the chief chauntours at the nale,
Market beters, and medling make,
Hoppen' and houtin with heve and hale;

At faire freſhe, and at winè ſtale,
Thei dine and drinke, and make debate;
The ſeven ſacramentes ſet a ſaile;
Kepe ſoche the kaies of hevin gate?
Mennis wivis thei wollin hold,
And though that thei ben right ſory,
To ſpeke thei ſhull not be ſo bold,
For ſompning to' the conſiſtory,
And make 'hem ſaie with mouthe I lie;
Though thei it ſawin with ther eye
His lemman holdin opinly
No man ſo harde to aſke why.
He woll have tithing and offring
Maugre whoſoevir it grutche,
And twiſe on the daie he woll ſing:
Godd'is prieſtis ne were none ſoche;
He mote go hunte with dogge and biche,
And blowen his horne and cryin Hey,
And ſorcerie uſen as a witche;
Soche kepin evill Peter's kèy.
Yet thei mote have ſome ſtocke or ſtone
Gaily paintid and proudly dight,
To makin men livin upon,
And ſaie that it is full of might,
About ſoche men ſet up grete light,
Other ſoche ſtockes ſhull ſtande therby
As darke as if it were midnight,
For it maie makin no maſtrie.

That it the leude peple ſe mowe,
Thou Mary, thou worcheſt wondir thinges,
About that that men offrin to
Hongin brochis, ouchis, and ringes;
The prieſt purchaſith the offringes,
But he n'ill offir to' none image:
Wo is the ſoule that he forſinges
That prechith for ſoche pilgrimage!
To men and women that ben pore,
Which that ben Chriſt'is owne likeneſſe,
Men ſhullin offir at ther dore,
That ſuffre hungir and diſtreſſe,
And to ſoche image offir leſſe,
That mowe not fele ne thirſte ne cold;
The pore in ſpirite gan Chriſt bleſſe,
Therfore offrith to feble' and old.
Buckilers brode and ſwerdis long,
Baudrike, with baſelardis kene,
Soche toles about ther necke thei hong:
With Antichriſt ſoche prieſtis ben;
Upon ther dedes it is well ſene
Whom thei ſervin, whom thei honouren;
Antichriſt'is thei ben all clene,
And Godd'is godes falſly devouren.
Of ſcarlet and grene gaiè gounes,
That mote be ſhapin for the newe,
To clippin and kiſſin in tounes
The damoſeles that to the daunce ſowe,

Cuttid clothes to ſewe ther hewe,
With longè pikis on ther ſhone:
Our Godd'is goſpell is not true;
Eithir thei ſerve the devill or none.
Now ben the prieſtis pokes ſo wide
Men muſt enlarge the veſtiment,
The holy goſpell thei doen hide
For the contrarien in raiment;
Soche prieſtes of Lucifer ben ſent:
Like conquerours thei ben araied,
The proude pendauntes at ther ars pent,
Falſely the trueth thei han betraied.
Shrift ſilvir ſoche wollin aſkeis,
And wollin men crepe to the crouche;
None of the ſacramentes ſave aſkis
Withoutin mede ſhall no man touche;
On ther biſhop ther warant vouche,
That is a lawe of the decre:
With mede and money thus thei mouche,
And thus thei ſain is charite.
Within the middis of ther maſſe
Thei n'ill have no man but for hire,
And full ſhortly let forth ypaſſe;
Soche ſhull men findin in eche ſhire
That parſonages for gaine deſire
To live in liking and in luſtes;
I dare not ſain *ſans oſe jeo dire*
That ſoche ben Antichriſt'is prieſtes.

Or thei yef the biſhoppis why,
Or thei mote ben in his ſervice,
And holdin forth ther harlottrie,
Soche prelates ben of feble' empriſe;
Of Godd'is grame ſoche men agriſe,
For ſoche mattirs that takin mede,
How thei' excuſe 'hem, and in what wiſe,
Methinkith thei ought gretely dredd.

Thei ſain that it to no man longeth
To reprove them, though that thei erre,
But falſly Godd'is godes thei fongeth,
And therwith maintein wo and werre;
Ther dedes ſhould be as bright as ſterre,
Ther living leudè mann'is light:
Thei ſaie The Pope ne maie not erre;
Nede muſt that paſſin mann'is might.

'Though' a prieſt lie with his lemman' al night,
And tellen his felowe and he him,
He goith to maſſe anon right,
And ſaieth he ſingeth out of ſinne;
His birde abideth him at his inne,
And dighteth his diner the mene while,
He ſingeth his maſſe for he would winne,
And ſo he wenith God begile.

'Hem thinkith long till thei be met,
And that thei uſe forth all the yere;
Emong the folke whan he is ſet
He holdith no man half his pere:

Of the biſhop he hath powere
To ſoile men, or els thei ben lore,
His abſolucion maketh them ſkere;
Wo is the ſoule that he ſingeth for!
The Griffon began for to threte,
And ſaied, Of monkis canſt thou ought?
The Pelli'can ſaid, Thei ben full grete,
And in this world moche wo hath wrought;
Sainct Benet, that ther ordir brought,
Ne made 'hem ner in ſoche manere,
I trowe it came ner in his thought
That thei ſhould uſe ſo grete powere.
That a man ſhould a monke Lorde call,
Ne ſerve him on knees as a king;
He is as proude as prince in pall,
In mete and drinke, and in all thing:
Some weren a miter and ring,
With double worſtid well idight,
With roiall mete and richè drinke,
And ride on courſer as a knight.
With haukis and with houndis eke,
With broche or ouchis on his hode;
Some ſaie no maſſe in all a weke;
Of deinties is ther moſtè fode
With lordſhippis and with bondmen;
This is a roiall regioun;
Sainct Benet made ner non of 'hem
To have lordſhip of man ne toune.

Now thei ben queint and curious,
With fine clothe clad and ſervid clene,
Proude, and angrie, and envious,
Malice is mochil that thei mene;
In catching craftie and covetous,
Lordly livin in grete liking;
This living' is not religious
According to Benet's living.
Thei ben clerkes, and courts ovir ſe,
Ther pore tenaunce fully thei ſlite;
The hier a man amercid be
The gladlyir thei woll it write:
This is farre from Chriſtes poverte,
For all with cove'tiſe thei endite;
On the pore thei have no pite,
Ne ner 'hem cheriſhe but or bite.
And comminly ſoche ben comen
Of pore peple', and of 'hem begete,
That this perfection han inomen:
Ther fathirs ride but on ther fete,
And travaile ſore for that thei ete,
In povert livith yong and old;
Ther fathirs ſuffreth drought and wete,
Many hungrie meles, thurſte, and cold.
And all this the monkes han forſake
For Chriſt'is love and Sainct Benete,
To pride and eſe have 'hem betake;
This religion is ill beſete:

Had thei ben out of religion
Thei muſt have hangid at the plowe,
Threſhid and diked fro toune to toune,
With ſorie mete not halfe inowe.
Therfore thei han this all forſake,
And take to riches, pride, and eſe;
Full fewe for God wol monkes 'hem make,
Lite is ſoche ordir for to praiſe;
Sainct Benet ordained it not ſo,
But bad 'hem to be cherèliche,
In churliche manir live and go,
Boiſtous in yerth, and not lordliche.
Thei diſclaunderin Sainct Benet,
Therfore thei have his holy curſe;
Sainct Benet with 'hem nevir met
But if thei thought to róbbe his purſe.
I can no more here of 'hem tell
But that thei ben like tho before,
And clene ſerve the devill of hell,
And ben his treſure and his ſtore;
And all ſoche othir counterfaitours,
Chanons, canons, and ſoche diſgiſed,
Ben Godd'is enemies and traitours,
His religion han foule diſpiſed;
And of freris I have before
Told in a makin of a crede,
And yet I could tell worſe and more,
But men would werien it to rede.

As Goddes godenes no man tell might,
Ne write ne ſpeke, no thinke in thought,
So ther falſhed and ther unright
Maie no man tell that ere God wrought.
The Griffon ſaied, Thou canſt no gode,
Thou came ner of no gentill kinde;
Othir I trowe thou waxiſt wode
Or ellis thou haſt loſte thy minde.
Should holy churche yhave no hedde
Who ſhould ybe her governaile,
Who ſhould her rule, who ſhould her redde,
Who ſhould her forthren, who availe?
Eche man ſhall live by his travaile;
Who beſt doith ſhall have moſt mede:
With ſtrength if men the churche aſſaile
With ſtrength men muſt defende her nede.
And if the Pope were purely pore
And nedy, and nothing ne had,
He ſhuld be drive from dore to dore;
The wickid of him n'olde not drad:
Of ſoche an hedde men would be fade,
And ſinfully liven' as 'hem luſt;
With ſtrength amendis ſoche be made,
With wepin wolves from ſhepe be wuſt.
If that the Pope and prelates would
So begge and bid, bowe and borowe,
Holy churche ſhould yſtande full cold,
Her ſervauntes ſit and ſoupe ſorowe;

And thei were noughtie, foule, and horowe,
To worſhip God men would wlate
Both on evin and on morowe:
Soche harlotrie men would hate.
And therfore men of holy churche
Shouldin be honeſte in all thing,
And worſhipfull God's workis werche;
So ſemeth is to ſerve Chriſt ther king
In honeſt and in clene clothing,
With veſſels of gold and clothes riche
To God honeſtly to' make offring,
For to his lordſhip none is liche.
The Pellican caſt an houge crie,
And ſaied, Alas! why ſaieſt thou ſo?
Chriſt is our hedde that ſitteth on hie,
Heddis ne ought we have no mo;
We ben his membres bothe alſo,
Fathir he taught us call him als,
Maiſters to call forbad he tho;
All maiſters ben wickid and fals
That takith maiſtrie in his name
Ghoſtly, and to win yerthly gode;
Kingis and lordes ſhould lordſhip have,
And rule the peple with milde mode,
But Chriſt, for us that ſhed his blode,
Bad his prieſts no maſtirſhip have,
Ne carke not for clothis ne fode;
From all miſchief he woll 'hem ſave.

Ther riche clothes ſhall be rightwiſneſſe,
Ther treſure a true life ſhall be,
Charite ſhall be ther richeſſe,
Ther lordſhip ſhall be unite,
And hope in God ther honeſte,
Ther veſſell a clene conſcience;
Pore in ſprite, and humilite,
Shall be holy church'is defence.
What! ſaied the Griffon, maie the greve
That othir folkis faren wele?
What haſt thou to doin with ther live?
Thy falſhed every man maie fele,
For thou ne canſt no cattell gete,
But liveſt in londe as a lorell,
With gloſing gettiſt thou thy mete;
So farith the devil in hell.
He would that eche man there ſhould dwell,
For he livith in clene envie,
So with the tales that thou doeſt tell
Thou wouldeſt othir peple deſtrie
With your gloſe and your hereſie,
For ye can live no bettir life
But clene in fals hypocriſie,
And bringiſt the in wo and ſtrife.
And therwith have ye not to doen,
For ye ne havin here no cure;
Ye ſerve the devill, not God ne man,
And he ſhall payin you your hire;

For ye wol farin well at feſtes,
And be warm clothid for the cold,
Therfore ye glosin Godd'is heſtes,
And begile peple yong and old.
And all the ſevin ſacramentes
Ye ſpeke ayenſt as ye were ſlie,
Tithings, offringes, with your ententes,
And on your Lord'is body lie:
All this ye doen to live in eſe,
As who ſayith Ther ben none ſoche,
And ſain The Pope' is not worth a peſe,
To make the peple' ayen him groche.
And this ycommith in by fendes
To bring the Chriſtin in diſtaunce,
For thei would that no man were frendes.
Levith thy chattring with miſchaunce!
If thou live well what wilt thou more?
Let othir men live as 'hem liſt,
Spendin ther gode or kepe in ſtore;
Othir mennes conſcience ner thou n'iſt.
Ye han no cure to anſwere fore;
What meddle' ye that han not to doen?
Let men live as thei han doen yore,
For thou ſhalt anſwere for no man.
The Pellican ſayid, Sir, naie,
I ne diſpiſid not the Pope
Ne no ſacrament, ſothe to ſaie,
But ſpeke in charite' and gode hope:

But I diſpiſe ther hiè pride,
Ther welthe that ſhould be pore in ſprite;
Ther wickidneſſe is knowe ſo wide,
Thei ſervin God in falſe habite,
And tournin mekeneſſe into pride,
And lowlineſſe into' hie degre,
And Godd'is wordis tourne and hide,
And I am moved by charite
To lettin men to livin ſo
With all my conning and my might,
And to warnin men of ther wo,
And to tellin 'hem trouth and right.
The ſacramentes be ſoul'is hele
If thei ben uſid in gode uſe;
Ayenſt that ſpeke I ner a dele,
For than ne were I nothing wiſe;
But thei that uſe 'hem in miſſe manere,
Or ſet 'hem up to any ſale,
I trowe thei ſhall abie 'hem dere;
This is my reſon, this my tale:
Who ſo taketh 'hem unrightfulliche
Ayenſt the ten commaundèmentes,
Or elles by glòſe wrechidliche
Selleth any of the ſacramentes,
I trowe thei doe the devill homage,
In that thei wetin thei doe wrong,
And therto I dare well to wage
Thei ſerve Sathan for all ther ſong.

To tithen' and offre' is holsome life,
So it be doen in due manere,
A man to houselin and to shrive,
Wedding, and all othir in fere.
So it be nother solde ne bought,
Ne takè ne give for covetise,
And it be so taken' it is nought;
Who selleth him so maie sore agrise:
On our Lordes body' I doe not lie,
I saie the sothe thorough true rede,
His flesshe and blode, through his misterie,
Is there all in the forme of brede.
How it is there it nedeth not strive,
Whethre' it be subget or accident,
But as Christ was whan he' was on live
So is he there in verament.
If Pope or cardi'nall live gode live,
As Christ us bad in his gospell,
Ayenst that ne woll I not strive,
But me thinkith thei live not well;
For if the Pope lived as God bedde,
Pride and highnesse he should dispise,
Richesse, covetise, and croune on hedde;
Mekenesse and poverte' he should use.
The Griffon saied he should abie,
Thou shall be brent in balefull fire,
And all thy sect I shall distrie;
Ye shall be hangid by the swire.

Ye ſhulle be hangid and to drawe!
Who givith you leve for to preche,
Or ſpekin againſt Godd'is lawe,
And the peple thus falſely teche?
Thou ſhalt be curſed with boke and bell,
And diſſevered from holie churche,
And clene idampnid into hell,
Othirwiſe but ye wollin worche.
The Pelli'can ſaied, That I ne drede;
Your curſing is of lite value;
Of God I hope to have my mede,
For it is falſhed that ye ſhewe,
For ye ben out of charite,
And wilne vengeaunce, as did Nero:
To ſuffrin I woll redy be;
I drede not all that thou canſt do.
Chriſt bad ones ſuffre for his love,
And ſo he taught all his ſervauntes,
But thou' amende for his ſake above;
I drede not all thy maintenaunce;
For if I drede the world'is hate
Me thinkith I were lite to praiſe:
I drede nothing your hie eſtate,
Ne I ne drede not your diſeſe.
Wollin ye tourne and leve your pride,
And your hie porte and your richeſſe,
Your curſing ſhould not go ſo wide;
God bring you into rightwiſeneſſe!

For I drede not your tirannie,
For nothing that ye can ydoen;
To ſuffre I am all redie,
Sikir I recke nevir how ſone.
The Griffon grinned as he were wode,
And lokid lovely as an owle,
And ſwore by cock'is herte and blode
He wold him tere every doule;
Holy churche thou diſclaundriſt foule;
For thy ſpeche I woll the to race,
And make thy fleſhe to rote and moule;
Loſell, thou ſhalt have hardè grace.
The Griffon flewe forth on his waie,
The Pellican did ſit and wepe,
And to himſelf he gan to ſaie,
God would that any of Chriſtes ſhepe
Had herdin, and itaken kepe
Eche a word that here ſayid was,
And would it write and well ikepe;
God would it were all for his grace!

Plowman.

I anſwerid, and ſaied I would,
If for my travaile one would pey.

Pellican.

He ſaied yes; theſe ther God han ſold,
For thei han grete ſtore of money.

Plowman.

I ſayid, Tell me and thou maie,
Why telliſt thou menn'is treſpace?

Pellican.

He ſaid, To' amende 'hem in gode fay,
If God woll give me any grace;
For Chriſt himſelf is liken to me,
That for his peple died on rode;
As fare I right ſo farith he,
He fedith his birdes with his blode:
But theſe doen evill ayenſt Gode,
And ben his foen undir frendes face;
I told 'hem how ther living ſtode,
And God amende 'hem for his grace!

Plowman.

What ailith the Griffon, tell why
That he holdith on the' othir ſide,
For thei two yben likily
And with kindis yrobin wide.

Pellican.

The foulè betokinith pride,
As Lucifer that high flewe was,
And ſith he did him in ill hide,
For he agiltid Godd'is grace.
As birde flyith up in the aire,
And livith by birdes that ben meke,
So theſe ben flowe up in diſpaire,
And ſhendin ſely ſoulis eke;
The ſoulis that ben in ſinnes eke
He culleth 'hem; knele therfore, alas!
For bribrie Godd'is forbode breke;
But God amende it for his grace!

The hinder parte is a lioun,
A robber and a raviner,
That robbeth the peple in yerth doune,
And in yerth holdith none his pere:
So fareth this foule both ferre and nere,
With tempo'rel ſtrength the peple chaſe
As a lion proude in yerth here;
May God amende 'hem for his grace!

Pellican.

He flewe forth with his wingis twain
All drouping, and daſid, and dull,
But ſone the Griffon came again,
Of his foulis the yerth was full;
The Pelli'can he had caſt to pull,
So grete nombre ner ſene there was,
What manir of foules telle I woll,
If God wol give me of his grace.

With the Griffon come foulis fele,
Ravins, rokis, crowis, and pie,
And graie foulis, agadrid wele,
Igurde above they wouldin hie,
Gledis and boſardes weren 'hem by,
White molles and puttockes toke ther place,
And lapwinges, that wel conith lie;
This company' han forlete ther grace.

Long while the Pellican was oute,
But at laſt he commith againe,
And brought with him the phenix ſtoute;
The Griffon would have ſlow ful faine,

His foulis flewen as thicke as raine,
The phenix tho began 'hem chace,
To flie from him it was in vaine,
For he did vengeaunce and no grace.
He ſlewe 'hem doune without mercy;
There eſtarte neither fre ne thrall;
On him they caſt a rufull crie
Whan that the Griffon doun was fall;
He bete him not, but ſlewe 'hem all:
Where he 'hem drove no man may trace:
Under the erth me thought they yall;
Alas, they had a feble grace!
The Pellican then axid right
For my writing if I have blame
Who then wol for me fight of flight?
Who ſhullin ſheldè me from ſhame?
He that yhad a maide to dame,
And the Lambè that ſlaine ywas,
Shal ſheldin me from goſtly blame,
For erthely harme is Godd'is grace.
Therfore I pray every man
Of my writing have me excuſed,
This writing writeth the Pellican,
That thus theſe peple hath diſpiſed;
For I am freſhe fully adviſed
I n'ill not mainteine his menace,
For the devill is ofte diſguiſed
To bring a man to evil grace.

Witith the Pelli'can and not me,
For herof I n'il not avowe
In hie ne lowe, ne no degre,
But as fable take it ye mowe.
To holy churche I will me bowe;
Eche man to' amende him Chriſte ſende ſpace!
And for my writing me alowe
He that' is almighty for his grace.

Here endeth The Plowman's Tale.

THE PROLOGUE;

Or, The mery adventure of the Pardonere and Tapſtere at the inn at Canterbury.

WHENALL this freſh feleſhip were come to Cantirbury,
As ye have herde to fore, with Talys glad and merry,

The Prologue] This Prologue and the Tale (Hiſtory of Beryn) which follows it were never before printed, and are taken out of a mſ. borrowed from the Honourable Lady Thinn's, and not to be met with in any of the other mſſ. which Mr. Urry had perused; ſo that if the ſenſe and meaſure of the verſe are not ſo perfect here as in the other Tales it muſt be attributed to the want of mſſ. upon the authority of which all the other corrections are chiefly grounded. The verſe in all probability is of the ſame kind with that of Gamelyn, and were it to be found in as many mſſ. might no doubt be as eaſily compleated, but having no other beſides the forementioned, the reader muſt be content with only a faithfull tranſcript of it out of that mſ. *Urry.*

Som of fotill ſentence of vertue and of lore,
And ſom of othir mirthis, for them that hold no ſtore
Of wiſdom, ne of holynes, ne of chivalry,
Nethir of vertuouſe matere, but to foly
Leyd wit and luſtis all to ſuch japis
As hurlewaynes meyne in every hegg that rapes
Thorough unſtabill mynde, ryght as the levis grene
Stondewn ageyn the wedir, ryght ſo by them I mene:
But no more hereof nowe at this ilche tyme,
In faving of my ſentence, my Prolog, and my ryme.
They toke their in, and loggit them at mydmorowe I trowe,
Alle cheker of the hope that many a man doth knowe;
Their Hooſt of Southworke, that with them went, as ye have herde to fore,
That was rewler of them al, of las and eke of more,
Ordeyned their dyner wiſely or they to chirch went,
Such vitaillis as he fonde in town, and for noon othir ſent.
The Pardonere beheld the beſynes, how ſtatis wer ifervid,
Diſkennyng hym al prively, and a ſyde ſwervid:
The hoſtelere was ſo halowid fro o plaſe to another
He toke his ſtaffe to the Tapſtere: Welcom myne own brother,
Quod ſhe, with a frendly loke, al redy for to kys;
And he, as a man ilerned of ſuch kyndnes,
Bracyd hir by the myddyll, and made hir gladly chere,
As thoughe he had iknowen hir al the rathir yeer:

She halid hym into the tapſtry there hir bed was makid;
Lo, here I ligg, (quod ſhe) myſelf al nyght al nakid,
Without manny's company ſyn my love was dede,
Jenkyn Harpour, yf ye hym knewe: from fete to the hede
Was not a luſtier perſone to daunce ne to lepe
Then he was, thoughe I it ſey: and therwith to wepe
She made, and with hir napron ſeir and white ywaſh
She wypid ſoft hir eyen for teris that ſhe out laſh
As grete as any mylſtone: upward gon they ſtert
For love of her ſwetyng, that ſat ſo nighe hir hert:
She weptand waylid, and wrong her hondis, and made much to done,
For they that loven ſo paſſyngly ſuch trowes they have echon:
She ſnyffith, ſighith, and ſhoke hire hede, and made rouful cher:
Benedicite! quod the Pardonere, and toke hir by the ſwere,
Yee make ſorowe inowgh, quod he, your life though ye ſhuld leſe.
It is no wondir, quod ſhe than; and therwith ſhe gan to ſneſe.
Aha! al hole, quod the Pardoner; your pennaunce is ſomewhat paſſid.
God forbede it els! quod ſhe, but it were ſomwhat I myght nat lyve els, thowe wotiſt, and it ſhuld long endure:
Now bleſſid be God of mendemente of hele and eke of cure!

Quod the Pardoner tho anoon, and toke hir by the chynne,
And ſayd to hir theſe wordis tho; Alas that love is ſyn!
So kynd a lover as yee be oon, and ſo trew of herte,
For be my trewe conſcience yit for yewe I ſmerte,
And ſhall this month hereafter, for your ſoden diſeſe;
Now wele wer hym ye lovid ſo he coud you pleſe;
I durſt ſwere upon a book that trewe heſhuld yewe fynd,
For he that is ſo yore dede is grene in yeur mynd.
Ye made me a ſory man; I dred ye wold have ſtervid.
Graunt mercy, gentil Sir, quod ſhe, that yee unaſervid:
Yee be a nobile man, ibleſſid mut yee be:
Sit down; ye ſhul drynk. Nay I wis (quod he)
I am faſtyng yit, myne own hert'is rote.
Faſtyng yit, alaſs! quod ſhe; therof I can gode bote.
She ſtert into the town and and fet a py al hote,
And ſet to fore the Pardonere; Jenken, I ween I n'ote
Is that your name I yow prey. ſwis, myne own ſuſtir,
So was I enformyd of them that did me foſtir.
And what is yowrs? Kitt, iwis; ſo cleped me my dame.
And Godd'is bleſſing have thow, Kitt; now broke wel thy name;
And privylich unlaſid his both eyen liddes,
And lokid hir in the viſage paramour amyddis,
And ſighed there with a litil time that ſhe it here myghte,
And gan to rown and feyn this ſong, *Now, love, then do me righte.*

Etc and be merry, quod ſhe; why breke ye nowt your
To wait more feleſhip it were but work in waſte. [faſt?
Whi make ye ſo dull chere? for your love at home?
Nay, forſooth, myne own hert, it is for you aloon. 74
For me? alaſs! what ſey ye? that wer a ſimple prey.
Trewlich yit, quod the Pardonere, it is as I yewe ſey.
Ye, etith and beth mery; we wol ſpeke thereof ſone;
Brennyd cat dredith foir: it is mery to be aloon;
For by our Lady Mary, that bare Jeſus on hir arm,
I coud nevir love yit but it did me harm, 80
For evir my manere hath be to love ovirmuch. [ſuch!
Now Criſt's bleſſing, quod the Pardonere, go with al
Lo! how the clowdis worchyn ech man to mete his
For trewly, gentil Criſtian, I uſe the ſame tach, [mach
And have ydo many a yer: I may it nat forbere, 85
For *Kynd woll have his cours* though men the contrary
ſwere:
And therewith he ſtert up ſmertly and caſt down a
grote.
What ſhal this do, gentil Sir? Nay, Sir, for my cote
I n'old ye payd a peny her and ſo ſone pas.
The Pardoner ſwore his grett othe he wold pay no las.
I wis, Sir, it is ovir do, but ſith it is yowr will 91
I woll putt it in my purſe leſt yee it take in ill
To refuſe your curteſy: and therwith ſhe gan to bowe.
Now trewly, quod the Pardoner, yeur maners been
to lowe,
For had ye countid ſtreytly, and nothing left behind,
I might have wele ydemed that ye be unkind, 96

And eke untrewe of hert, and ſooner me forgete,
But ye liſt be my treſorer, for we ſhall offter mete.
Now certen, quod the Tapſter, ye have a rede ful even,
As wold to God ye couth as wele undo my ſweven
That I my ſelf did mete this nyght that is ypaſſid,
How I was in a chirch when it was all ymaſſid,
And was in my devocioune tyl ſervice was al doon,
Tyl the preeſt and the clerk boyſtly bad me goon,
And put me out of the chirch with an egir mode.
Now Seynt Daniel, quod the Pardonere, your ſwevyn turn to gode,
And I woll halſow it to the beſt, have it in yeur mynd,
For comynly of theſe ſwevyngs the contrary men ſhul fynd.
Ye have be a lover glad, and litil joy yhad;
Plick up a luſty hert, and be mery and glad,
For ye ſhul have an huſbond that ſhall yewe wed to wyve,
That ſhal love yewe as hertly as his own lyve.
The preeſt that put yew out of chirch ſhall lede you in ageyne,
And helpe to yeur mariage with al his might and main.
This is the ſweven al and ſom Kit; how likith the?
Be my trowith wondir wele, bleſſid mut thowe be!
Then toke he leve at that tyme, tyll he com efftſone,
And went to his feleſhip (as it was to doon)
Thoughe it be no grete holynes to prech this ilk matere,
And that ſom liſt to her it, yit, Sirs, ner the latter
Endurith for a while and ſuffrith them that woll, pull
And ye ſhull her how the Tapſter made the Pardoner

Garlik all the long nyghte til it was ner end day;
For the more chere she made of love the falser was her lay:
But litil charge gaff she therof, tho she acquit his while,
For ethir is thought and tent was othir to begile,
As ye shul here hereaftir, when tyme comith and spase
To meve such matere.—But now a litil spase
I wol return me ageyn to the company,
The Knyghte and al the feleship, and nothing for to ly.
Whan they wer al yloggit, as skil wold and reson,
Everich aftir his degre, to chirch then was sesson
To pas and to wend to make their offringis,
Righte as their devocioune was, of silver broch and ryngis;
Then at chirch dorr the curtesy gan to ryse
Tyl the Knyght, of gentilnes that knewe right wele the guyse,
Put forth the prelatis, the Parson, and his fere,
A Monk that took the spryngill with a manly chere,
And did as the manere is, moilid al their patis
Everich aftir othir, righte as they were of statis:
The Frer seynyd setously the spryngill for to hold
To spryng oppon the remnaunt, that for his cope he n'old
Have laft that occupacioune in that holy plase,
So longid his holy conscience to se the Nonn's face.
The Knyght went with his compers toward the holy shryne
To do that they wer com for, and aftir for to dyne:

The Pardoner and the Miller, and othir lewde fotes,
Sought 'hem ſelf in the chirch right as lewd gotes,
Pyrid faſt and pourid high upon the glaſe,
Counterfetyng gentilmen the armys for to blaſe,
Diſkynering faſt the peyntur, and for the ſtory mour-
nid,
And a red al ſo right as rammys hornyd.
He berith a balſtaff, quod the toon, and els a rakid end;
Thow faileſt, quod the Miller, thow haſt nat wel thy
mynd;
It is a ſpere, yf thow canſt ſe, with a prik tofore,
To puſh a down his enmy, and through the ſhoulder
bore:
Peſe, quod the Houſt of Southwork; let ſtond the wyn-
dow glaſid;
Goith up and doith your offerynge; ye ſemith half
amaſid:
Sith ye be in company of honeſt men and good
Worchith ſomwhat aftir them, and let the kynd of
brode
Pas for a tyme; I hold it for the beſt,
For who doith aſtir company may live the bet in reſt.
Then paſſid they forth boyſtly goglingwiththeir hedis,
Knelid adown to fore the ſhrine, and hertlich their bedis
They preyd to Seint Thomas in ſuch wyſe as they
couth;
And ſith the holy relikes ech man with his mowith
Kiſſid, as a goodly mouk the names told and taught,
And ſith to othir places of holynes they raught,
And wer in their devocioune tyl ſervice wer al doon,
And ſith they drowgh to dynerward as it drew to noon,

Then, as manere and custom is, signes there they bought,
For men of contre shuld know whome they had sought.
Eche man set his silver in such thing as they likid,
And in the meen while the Miller had ypikid
His bosom ful of signys of Caunterbury brochis,
Though the Pardoner and he pryvely in hir pouchis
They put them afterwards, that noon of them it wist,
Save the Sompner seid somwhat, and seyd to he list
Halff part, quod he, prively rownyng on their ere;
Husht! pees, quod the Miller, seist thou nat the Frere,
How he lowrith undir his hood with a doggish eye?
Hit shuld be a privy thing that he coud nat aspy;
Of every craft he can somwhat, our Lady give hym sorowe!
Amen, tho quod the Sompner, on eve and eke on morowe:
So cursid a Tale he told of me the devill of hell hym spede,
And me, but yf I pay him wele and quyte wele his mede.
Yf it hap homward that ech man tell his Tale,
As we did hiderward, though we shuld set at sale
All the shrewdnes that I can, I woll hym nothing spare,
That I n'ol touch his takerd somwhat of his care.
They set their signys upon their hedes, and som oppon their capp,
And sith to the dynerward they gan for to stapp.
Every man in his degre wish and toke his sete,
As they wer wont to doon at soper and at mete,

And wer in ſilence for a tyme tyl good ale gan ariſe,
And then, as nature axith, as theſe old wife
Knowen wele, when veynys been ſomwhat replete,
The ſpirits wol ſtere, and alſo metis ſwete
Cauſen oft myrthis for to be ymevid,
And eke it was no tyme tho for to be ygrevid:
Every man in his wyſe made hertly chere,
Telling his ſelowe of ſportys and of chere,
And of othir mirthis that fellyn by the wey,
As cuſtom is of pylgryms, and hath been many a dey.
The Hooſt leid to his ere, of Southwerke as ye knowe,
And thenkid al the company both high and lowe,
So wele kepeing the covenaunt in Southwork that was made,
That every man ſhuld by the wey with a Tale glade
All the whole company in ſhorting of the wey;
And al is wele performed: but than now thus I ſey,
That we muſt ſo homeward ech man tel anothir.
Thus we wer accordit, and I ſhuld be a rathir
To ſet yewe in governaunce by right ful jugement.
Trewly Hooſt, quod the Frer, that was all our aſſent,
With a litil more that I ſhall ſey therto:
Yee graunted of yeur curteſy that we ſhuld alſo
All the hole company ſope with yewe at nyght:
Thus I trow that it was; what ſey you, Sir Knyght?
It ſhal nat nede, quod the Hooſt, to axe no witnes;
Your record is good I nowe; and of yeur gentilnes
Yit I prey yew efft ageyn; for by Seynt Thomas ſhryne
And ye woll hold covenaunt I woll hold myne.

Now trewly Hooſt, quod the Knyght, ye have right wel yſeyd;
And as towching my perſone I hold me payde;
And ſo I trowe that al doith: Sirs, what ſey yee?
The Monk and eke the Marchaunte and al ſeid Ye.
Then al this aftir-mete, I hold it for the beſt,
To ſport and pley us, quod the Hooſt, eche man as hym leſt,
And go by tyme to ſoper and to bed alſo,
So mowe we erly ryſen our jorney for to do.
The Knight aroſe therwithal, and caſt on a freſher gown,
And his ſone anothir, to walk in the town,
And ſo did all the remnaunt that wer of that aray,
That had their chaungis with them, they made them freſh and gay,
Sortid them togidir, right as their luſtis lay,
As they were more uſid travelling by the way.
The Knyght with his meyne went to ſe the walle
And the wards of the town, as to a knyght befall,
Deviſing ententiflich the ſtrengthis al about,
And apointid to his ſone the perell and the dout
For ſhot of arblaſt and of bowe, and eke for ſhot of gonne,
Unto the wardis of the town, and how it might be wone;
And al defence ther ageyn aftir his intent
He declarid compendiouſly, and al that evir he ment
He ſone perſeyvid every poynt, as he was full abil.
To armes and to travaile and perſone covenabill
He was of all factur aftir fourm of kynd,
And for to deme his governaunce it ſemed that his mynd

Was much in his lady that he lovid beſt, [reſt.
That made hym offt to wake when he ſhuld have his
The Clerk that was of Oxenforth onto the Sompnore
ſeyd,
Me ſemeth of grete clerge that thow art amayde,
For thou putteſt on the Frer in maner of repreff,
That he knoweth falſhede, vice, and eke a theff;
And I it hold vertuouſe and right commendabill
To have very knowlech of things reprovabill;
For who ſo may eſchew it, and let it pas by,
And els he myght fall theron unward and ſodenly.
And thoughe the Frer told a Tale of a Sompnour,
Thow oughtiſt for to take it for no diſhonour,
For of al craftis and of eche degre
They be not al perfite, but ſom nyce be.
Lo! what is worthy, ſeyd the Knight, for to he a clerk;
To ſommon among us them this mocioune was ful
I comend his wittis and eke his clerge, [derke:
For of ether parte he ſaveth honeſte.
The Monk toke the Parſone then and the grey Frer,
And preyd them for curteſy for to go in fere:
I have ther acquaintaunce that al this yeris thre
Hath preyd hym by his lettris that I hym wold ſe;
And ye my brothir in habit and in poſſeſſioune,
And now I am here methinketh it is to doon,
To preve it in dede what chere he wold me make,
And to yew my frende alſo for my ſake.

They went forth togidir talking of holy matere,
But woot ye wele in certeyn they had no mind on watere
To drynk at that tyme, when they wer met in fere,
For of the beſt that myght be founde, and therewith mery chere,
They had, it is no doubte; for ſpycys and eke wine
Went round about the gaſtoyn and eke the ruyne.
The Wyfe of Bath was ſo wery ſhe had no wyl to walk,
She toke the Priores by the honde; Madam, wol ye ſtalk
Pryvely into the garden to ſe the herbis growe,
And aſtir with our hoſt is wife in hir parlour rowe!
I wol gyve yewe the wyne and ye ſhul me alſo,
For tyl we go to ſoper we have naughs ellis to do.
The Priores, as woman taught of gentil blood and hend,
Aſſentid to hir counſel, and forth gon they wend,
Paſſyng forth ſoftely into the herbery,
For many a herb grewe for fewe and ſurgery,
And all the aleys feir, and parid, and raylid, and ymakid,
The ſavige and the iſope yfrethid and yſtakid,
And othir beddis by and by freſh ydight,
For comers to the hooſte right a ſportful ſight.
The Marchaunt and the Manciple, the Miller and the Reve,
And the Clerk of Oxenforth, to townward gan they meve,
And al the othir meyne, and laſt noon at home goon
Save the Pardoner, that pryvelich when al they wer

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To make his covenaunte in certeyn that same eve;
He wold be loggit with hir, that was his hole entention.
But hap and eke Fortune, and all the constellacioune,
Was clere hym ageyns, as ye shul aftir here;
For hym had better be yloggit al nyght in a myere
Then he was the same nyght or the sun was up;
For such was his fortune he drank without the cupp;
But thereof wist he no delay; ne *No man of us alle*
May have that high connyng to know what shal befall.
He stappid into the tapstry wondir pryvely,
And fond hir ligging litylong with half slopy eye,
Pourid fellich undir hir hood, and sawe al his comyng,
And lay ay still, as naught she knewe, but feynid hir slepyng.
He put his hond to hir brest; Awake, quod he, awake.
A, *benedicite!* Sir, who wist yew her? out tho I myght
Prisoner, quod the Tapstere, being al aloon; [be take
And therwith breyd up in a frite, and began to groon.
Now sith ye be my prisoner yeld yew now, quod he.
I must nedis, quod she, I may nothyng fle;
And eke I have no strengith, and am but yong of age,
And also *It is no mastry to cach a mouse in a cage*
That may no where stert out, but closid wondir fast;
And eke, Sir, I tell yew though I had grete hast
Ye shuld have coughed when ye com. Wher lern you curtesy?
Now trewlich I must chide, for of right pryvety

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Women ben ſom tyme of day when they be aloon.
Wher coud I yew prey when ye com eſtſone?
Nowe mercy, dere ſwetyng! I wol do ſo no more;
I thank you an hundrit ſithis; and alſo by your lore
I wol do hereaftir in what plaſe that I com:
But lovers, Kitt, ben evil avyſid full oft, and to lom;
Wherfor I prey you hertlich hold me excuſed,
And I behote yew trewly it ſhall no more be uſid.
But now to our purpoſe: how have ye fare
Sith I was wyth you laſt? that is my moſt care;
For yf yee eylid eny thing othir wiſe then good
Trewly it wold chaunge my chere and my blood.
I have farid the wers for yewe, quod Kitt: do ye no [drede
God that is above? and eke ye had no nede
For to congir me, God woot, wyth your nygromancy,
That have no more to vaunte me but oonly my body,
And yf it were diſteynid then wer I ondo:
I wis I trowe, Jenkyn, ye be nat to truſt to;
For evir more ye clerkis con ſo much in book
Yee wol wynn a woman at firſt look
Thought the Pardonere, this goth wele, and made his beter chere,
And axid of hir ſoftly, Love! who ſhall ligg here
This nyght that is to comyng? I prey yewe tell me.
Iwis it is grete nede to tell yewe, quod ſhe:
Make it nat overqueynt though you be a clerk;
Ye knowe wele inough iwis by loke, by word, by work.

Shal I com than, Chriſtian, and feſe awey the cat?
Shal ye com? *per benedicite!* what queſtion is that?
Wherfor I prey you hertly to be my counſail;
Comyth ſomwhat late, and for nothing faill;
The dorr ſhall ſtond thar up; put it from yew ſoft,
But be wele avyſid ye wake nat them on lofft.
Care ye nat, quod Jenkin, I can theron at beſt;
Shal no man for my ſtepyng be wakid of his reſt.
Anoon they dronk the beverage, and wer of oon accord,
As it ſemed by their chere and alſo by their word:
And al a ſtaunce ſhe lovid hym wele, ſhe toke hym by the ſwere,
As though he had lernyd cury favel of ſom old frere.
The Pardoner plukkid out of his purs I trow the dowry,
And toke it Kitt in hir hond, and bad her pryvely
To orden a rere ſopor for them both to,
A cawdell ymade with ſwete wyne and with ſugir alſo,
For trewly I have no talent to ete in yeur abſence,
So longith my hert toward yew to be in yewr preſence.
He toke his leve, and went his wey as though nothing wer,
And met wyth al the felſhip; but in what plaſe ne wher
He ſpake no word therof, but held hym cloſe and ſtyll,
As he that hopid ſikirlich to have had al his wyll,
And thought many a mery thought by hymſelf aloon:
I am a loggit, thought he beſt, how ſo evir it goon;

And thoughe it have coſtid me, yit wol I do my peyn
For to pike hir purs to nyghte and win my coſt ageyn.
Now leve I the Pardonere tyll that it be eve,
And wol returne me ageyn righte ther as I did leve.
Whan al wer com togider in their herbergage
The Hooſt of Southwork, as ye knowe, that had no ſpice of rage,
But al thing wrought prudenciall, as ſobir man and wiſe;
Now wol we to the ſoup, Sir Knyght, ſeith yeur avyſe,
Quod the Hooſt ful curteyſly, and in the ſame wiſe.
The Knyght anſwer'd him ageyn, Sir as ye devyſe
I muſt obey, ye woot wele; but yf I faill wytt
Then takith theſe prelatis to yewe, and waſhith and go ſit;
For I woll be yewr Marchall and ſerve yewe, ech one,
And then the officers and I to ſoper ſhall we gone.
They wiſh, and ſett right as he bad, eche man wyth his fere,
And begonne to talk of ſportis and of chere
That they had the aftir-mete whiles they wer out,
For othir occupacioune tyll they wer ſervid about
They had nat at that tyme, but every man kitt a loff;
But the Pardoner kept hym cloſe, and told nothing of
The myrth and hope that he had, but kept it for hymſelf;
And thoughe he did it is no fors, for he had nede to ſolve
Long or it wer mydnyght, as ye ſhul her ſone,
For he met with his love in crokeing of the moon.

They wer yſervyd honeſtly, and eche man held hym payde,
For of o manere of ſervice their ſoper was araide,
As ſkill wold and reſon, ſith the leſt of all
Payid ylike much, for growing of the gall: [ſtreight,
But yit as curteſy axith, though it wer ſom dele
The ſtatis that wer above had of the feyreſt endreyte;
Wherfor they did their gentilnes ageyn to all the rout,
They dronken wyne at their coſt onys round about.
Now paſs I lightly ovir. When they ſoupid had
Tho that were of governaunce, as wyſe men and ſad,
Went to their reſt, and made no more to doon,
But Miller and the Coke dronken by the moon
Twyes to eche othir in the repenyng;
And when the Pardoner them eſpy'd anoon he gan to *Doubill me this bourden*, chokelyng in his throte, [ſing
For the Tapſter ſhuld here of his mery note:
He clepid to hym the Sompnour, that was his own diſ-
The Yeman and the Reve, and the Mancipill, [cipill,
And ſtoden ſo holowyng; for nothing wold they leve
Tyl the tyme that it was well within eve.
The Hooſt of Southwork herd them wele, and the Marchaunt both,
As they wer at a countis, and wexen ſomewhat wroth,
But yet they preyd them curteyſly to reſt for to wend,
And ſo they did all the rout; they dronk and made an end.

And eche man droughe to *eusty* to slepe and take his rest
Save the Pardoner, that drew apart, and weytid by a cheste
For to hide hymself tyl the candill wer out:
And in the meen while, have ye no doute,
The Tapster and hir paramour, and the hosteler of the house,
Sitt togidir pryvelich, and of the best gouse
That was yfound in town and yset at sale
They had there of sufficiaunt, and dronk but litill ale;
And sit and ete the cawdell for the Pardoner that was made, [bade:
With sugir and with swete wyne, right as hymself
So he that payd for all in feer had not a twynt,
For offt is more better ymerkid then ymynt:
And so farid he ful right as ye have yherd,
But *Who is that a woman could not make his berd*,
And she wer therabout, and set hir wytt therto?
Ye woot wele I ly nat, and wher I do or no
I wol nat here termyn it, lest ladies stond in plase
Or els gentil women, for lesing of my grace
Of daliaunce and of sportis and of goodly chere;
Therfor anenst their estatis I wol in no manere
Deme ne determyn, but of lewd kitts,
As tapsters, and othir such that hath wyly wytts,
To pike mennys pursis, and eke to bler their eye;
So wele they make seme soth when they falsest by.
Now of Kitt Tapster, and of hir paramour,
And the hosteler of the house, that sit in Kittis bour,

When they had ete and dronk right in the ſame plaſe,
Kit began to rendir out all thing as it was;
The wowing of the Pardoner, and his coſt alſo,
And how he hopid for to lygg al nyght wyth hir alſo;
But therof he ſhall be ſikir as of God'is cope; [ſclope
And ſodeynly kiſſid her paramour, and ſeyd, We ſhul
Togidir hul by hul, as we have many a nyght,
And yf he com and make noyſe, I prey yewe dub hym
Knyght.
Yes, Dame, quod hir paramour, be thou not agaſt;
This is his own ſtaff thou ſeyſt, therof he ſhall ataſt.
Now trewly, quod the hoſteler, and he com by my lot
He ſhall drink for Kittis love wythout cup or pot;
And he be ſo hardy to wake eny giſt [miſt;
I make a vowe to the pecock there ſhal wake a foul
And aroſe up therewithal and toke his leve anoon:
It was a ſhrewid company; they had ſervid ſo many
oon.
With ſuch manere of feleſhip ne kepe I never to dele,
Ne no man that lovith his worſhip and his hele.
Quod Kitt to hir paramour, Ye muſt wake a whyle,
For trewlich I am ſikir that within this myle
The Pardoner wol be comyng, his hete to aſwage,
But loke ye pay hym redelich to kele his corage;
And therfor, love, diſchance yewe not tyll this chek
No, for God, Kitt, that wol I no. [be do.
Then Kitt went to bed, and blewe out all the light,
And by that tyme it was ner hond quarter nyght.

Whan all was ſtill the Pardoner gan to walk,
As glad as eny goldſynch that he herd no man talk,
And drowghe to Kittis dorward to herken and to liſt,
And went to have fond the dor up; but the haſp and
Held hym out a whils, and the lok alſo; [eke the twiſt
Yit trowid he no gile, but went ner to,
And ſcrapid the dorr welplich, and wynyd wyth his
Aftir a doggis lyden, as nere as he couith. [mowith
Awey, dog, with evill deth! quod he that was within,
And made hym all redy the dorr to unpin.
A! thought the Pardoner, tho I trow my berd be made;
The Tapſter hath a paramour, and hath made them glade
With the cawdell that I ordeyned for me, as I gueſs;
Now the devill hir ſpede, ſuch oon as ſhe is. [rowe;
She ſeid I had ycongerid hir; our Lady gyve hir ſo-
Now wold to God ſhe wer in ſtokis tyl I ſhuld hir borowe,
For ſhe is the falſeſt that evir yit I knewe; [trewe.
To pik the mony out of my purs, Lord! ſhe made hir
And therewyth he caught a cardiakill and a cold ſot,
For who have love longing, and is of corage hote,
He hath ful many a myry thought tofore his delyte;
And right ſo had the Pardoner, and was in evil plight;
For fayling of his purpoſe he was nothing in eſe,
Wherfor he fill ſodenlich into a wood reſe,
Entryng wondir faſt into a frenſy
For pur very angir and for jelouſy;

For when he herd a man within he was almoſt wood,
And becauſe the coſt was his no marvel tho the moud
Wer turned into vengaunce, yf it myght be:
But this was the myſchief; all ſo ſtrong as he
Was he that was within, and lighter man alſo,
As provid wele the bataile betwene them both to.
The Pardonere ſcrapid efft ageyn; for nothyng wold he blyn,
So feyn he wold have herd more of hym that was within.
What dog is that? quod the paramour; Kit, woſt thou [ere?
Have God my trowith, quod ſhe, it is the Pardonere.
The Pardoner, with myſcheff! God gyve hym evil
Sir, ſhe ſeid, by my trowith he is the ſame theff. [preff!
Therof thou lieſt, quod the Pardoner, and might nat long forbere.
A thy fals body! quod he; the devil of hell the tere!
For by my trowith a falsſher ſawe I nevir noon,
And nempnid hir namys many mo then oon,
Though to rech hir wer noon honeſte
Among men of good worſhip and degre.
But, ſhortly to conclude; when he had chid inowe
He axid his ſtaff ſpitouſlich, with wordis ſharp and rowe.
Go to bed, quod he within; no more noyſe thow make;
Thy ſtaff ſhal be redy to morowe I undertake.
In ſoth, quod he, I wol nat fro the dorr wend
Tyl I have my ſtaff. Thow bribour, then have the todir end,

Quod he that was within; and leyd it on his bak,
Right in the ſame plaſe as chapmen berith their pak;
And ſo he did to mo, as he coud a rede,
Graſpyng aftir with the ſtaff in lengith and eke in
And fond hym othir whyle redlich inoughe [brede;
With the ſtaffys end high upon the browe.
The hoſteler ley oppon his bed and herd of thisaffray,
And ſtert hym up lightlich, and thought he wold aſay:
He toke a ſtaff in his hond, and highed wondir blyve
Tyl he wer with the feleſhip that ſhuld nevir thryve.
What be yee? quod the hoſteler; and knew them both
wele.
Hyuſt! peſe, quod the paramour: Jak, thow muſt be
Ther is a theff, I tell the, within this hall dorr. [fele;
A theff! quod Jak: this is is a nobill chere
That thou hym haſt yfound, yf wee hym myght cach.
Yis, yis, care the nought; with hym we ſhul mach
Wele inowe or he be go, yf ſo we had lighte,
For we to be ſtrong inowe with o man ſor to fighte.
The devil of hell, quod Jak, breke this thev'is bonis!
The key of the kitchen, as it wer for the nonys,
Is above with our dame: and ſhe hath ſuch uſage,
And ſhe be wake of her ſlepe, ſhe fallith in ſuch a rage
That al the weke aftir there may no man hir pleſe,
So ſhe ſterith aboute this houſe in a wood reſe.
But now I am aviſid bet how we ſhul have lyte;
I have too giſtis within that this ſame nyght
Sopid in the halle, and had a litill ſeir:
Go up, quod Jak, and loke, and in the aſhis pire,

And I wol kepe the dorr; he ſhall not ſtert out.
Nay, for God that wol I nat, leſt I cach a clout,
Seid the todir to Jak, for thou knowiſt bettir then I
All the eſtris of this houſe; go up thyſelf and ſpy.
Nay, for ſoth, quod Jak, that were grete unrighte
To aventur oppon a man that with hym did not fighte:
Sithens thou haſt hym bete and with thy ſtaff ypilt,
Me thinkith it wer no reſon that I ſhuld bere the gilt;
For by the blyſyng of the cole he myght ſe myne hede,
And lightly lene me ſuch a ſtroke my hond to be dede.
Then wol we do by common aſſent ſech hym al about;
Who that metith hym firſt pay him on the ſnout;
For methought I herd hym here laſt among the pannys.
Kepe thou the toder ſide, but ware the watir cannys,
And if he be herein ryght ſone we ſhull hym fynde,
And we to be ſtrong inowghe o theſſe for to hynde.
Aha ha! thought the Pardoner, beth the pannys aryn?
And drowghe oppon that ſide, and thought oppon a gynne;
So at laſt he fond oon, and ſet it on his hede,
For as the caſe was fall ther' to he had grete nede:
But yit he graſpit ferthirmore to have ſomwhat in
And fond a grete ladill right as he was gonde, [honde,
And thought for to ſterte out betwene them both to
And waytid wele the paramour that had doon hym woo,
And ſet him with the ladill on the gruſcill on the noſe,
That all the week after he had ſuch a poſe,

That both his eyin waterid erlich by the morowē,
But ſhe that was the cauſe of it had ther'of noſorowe.
But now to the Pardoner. As he wold ſtert awey
The hoſteler met with hym, but nothyng to his pay:
The Pardoner ran ſo ſwith the pan fill him fro,
And Jak hoſteler aftir hym as blyve as he myght go,
And ſtapid oppon a brondeal unware,
That hym had bin beter to have goon more aſware,
For the egg of the pann met with his ſhynne,
And karff atoo a veyn and the next ſyn:
But whils that it was grene he thought litil on,
But when the greneneſs was apaſt the greff ſat ner the bone;
Yit Jak leyd to his hond to grope wher it ſete,
And when he fond he was yhurt the Pardoner he gan to threte,
And ſwore by Seynt Amyas that he ſhuld abigg
With ſtroks hard and ſore even oppon the rigg;
Yf he hym myght fynd he nothyng wold hym ſpare.
That herd the Pardoner wele, and held hym bettir a ſquare,
And thought that he had ſtrokis ryght inough,
Wytnes on his armys, his bak, and his browe.
Jak then, quod the paramour, where is the theff ago?
I n'ote, quod tho Jak; right now he lept me fro,
That Criſt'is curs go with hym, for I have harm and ſpite:
Be my trowith and I alſo and he go:th nat al quyte:
But and we myght hym fynd we wold aray hym ſo
That he ſhuld have legg ne foot to morowe on to go,

But how ſhull we hym fynd? the moon is adown,
(As grace was for the Pardoner) and eke when they did roun
He herd them evir wele inowe, and went the more aſyde,
And drew him evir bakward, and let the ſtrokis glide.
Jak, quod the paramour, I hold it for the beſt,
Sith the moon is down, for to go to reſt,
And make the gatis faſt; he may not then aſtert,
And eke of his own ſtaff he berith a redy mark,
Wherby thou mayeſt him knowe among all the route,
And thou ber a redy ey, and weyt wele aboute
To morowe when they ſhul wend; this is the beſt rede:
Jak, what ſeyſt thou therto? is this wele yſeyd?
Thy wit is clere, quod Jak; thy wit mut nedis ſtond.
He made the gatis faſt; ther is no more to doon.
The Pardoner ſtode aſide, his chekis ron and bled,
And was ryght evil at eſe al nyght in his hede:
He muſt of force lige lyke a colyn ſwerd,
Yit it mevid him wondir ſore for making of his berd;
He payd at full ther'fore through a womans art
For wyne and eke for cawdill, and had ther'of no part:
He ther'for preyd Seynt Juliane, as ye mowe onderſtonde,
That the devill her ſhulde ſpede on watir and on londe,
So to diſſeive a travellyng man of his herbergage,
And coud not els ſave curs his angir to aſwage;

And was distract of his wit, and in grete despayr,
For aftir his hete he caught a cold through the nyght'is eyr,
That he was ner afoundit, and coud none othir help:
But as he sought his loggyng he happid oppon a whelp
That ley undir a steyir, a grete Walsh dog,
That bare about his neck a grete huge clog;
Because that he was spetouse, and wold sone bite,
The clog was hongit about his nek, for men shuld nat wite
Nothyng the dogg'is maister yf he did eny harm,
So for to excuse them both it was a wyly charm.
The Pardoner wold have loggit hym ther, and lay somwhat nigh,
The warrok was awakid and caught hym by the thigh,
And bote hym wondir spetously, defending wele his couch,
That the Pardoner myght nat ne hym nether touch,
But held hym a square by that othir side,
As holsom was at that tyme for tereing of his hyde:
He coud noon othir help, but leyd adown his hede
In the dogg'is littir, and wishid aftir brede
Many a time and offt, the dog for to plese,
To have yle ymore nere for his own ese:
But wish what he wold his fortune seyd Ney;
So trewly for the Pardoner it was a dismal dey.
The dog ley evir grownyng, redy for to snache,
Wher for the Pardoner durst nat with hym mache,

But ley as still as eny stone, remembryng his foly,
That he wold trust a Tapster of a common hostry;
For commonly for the most part they ben wyly echon.
But now to alle the company a morrow whan they
shuld gon, 656
Was noon of all the feleship half so sone ydight
As was the gentil Pardoner; for al tyme of the nyght
He was aredy in his aray, and had nothing to doon
Saffe shake alite his eris, and trus and be goone. 660
Yet or he cam in company he wissh away the blood,
And bond the sorys to his hede with the typet of his
And made lightsom chere, for men shuld nat spy[hood,
Nothyng of his turment ne of his luxury;
And the hosteler of the house, for nothyng he coud pry,
He coud nat knowe the Pardoner among the company
Amorowe when they shuld wend, for ought that they
coud pour, 667
So wysely went the Pardoner out of the dogg'is bour,
And blynched from the hosteler, and turned offt about,
And evirmore beheld hym amydward of the rout; 670
And was evir syngyng to make al thyng good;
But yit his notis wer somwhat low for aking of his
So at that tyme he had no more grame, [hede:
But held hym to his hapynes to scape shame. 674
The Knyght and al the feleship forward gon they
Passyng forth merely to the town'ys end; [wend,
And by that tyme they wer ther the day began to rype,
And the son merely upward gan he pike,

Pleying undir the egge of the firmament.
Now, quod the Hoost of Southwork, and to the fele-
Who sawe evir so feyr or so glad a day, [ship bent,
And how sote this sesoun is entring into May? [nyng,
The thrustelis and the thrusshis, in this glad mor-
The ruddok and the goldfynch; but the nyghtyngale
His amerous notis lo how he twynyth small! [thing
Lo how the trees grenyth that nakid wer, and no-
Bare this month afore but their sommer clothing!
Lo how Nature makith for them evirichone!
And as many as ther be he forgettith noone!
Lo how the sesoun of the yere and Averell shouris
Doith the busshis burgyn out blossoms and flouris!
Lo the pryme rosis how fresh they ben to sene!
And many othir flouris among the grasis grene
Lo how they spryng, and sprede, and of divers hue!
Beholdith, and feith both rede, white, and blue!
That lusty bin and comfortabill for mann'ys sight!
For I sey for my self it makith my hert to light.
Now sith Almighty Soveryn hath sent so feir a dey.
Let se now, as covenant is, in shorting of the wey,
Who shall be the first that shall unlace his male
In comfort of us al, and gyn some merry Tale;
For and we shuld now begyn to draw lot
Peraventure it myght fal ther it ought not,
On som unlusty persone that wer not wele awakid,
Or semybousy ovyr eve, and had ysong and crakid.

Somwhat ovir much: how ſhuld he than do?
For *Who ſhuld tell a Tale he muſt have good wyll therto.*
And eke ſom men faſtyng beth glewid and ybound
In their tongis; and ſome faſtyng beth nothyng jocound;
And ſom in the morning their mouthis beth adoun;
Tyll that they be chatmyd their wordis woll not ſoun.
So thys is my concluſioune and my laſt knot,
It wer grete gentilnes to tell without lot.
By the rood of Bromholm, quod the Marchant thio,
As fer as I have ſailed, riden and ygo,
Sawe I nevir man yet toforn this ilk day
So wele coud rule a company as our Hoſt, in fay;
His wordis ben ſo comfortabill, and comyth ſo in ſeſon,
That my wit is ovircome to make eny reſon,
Contrary to his counſaill at myn ymaginacioune,
Wher'for I woll tell a Tale to your conſolacioune,
In enſampill to yowe that when that I have do
Anothir be right redy then for to tell, ryght ſo
To fulfyll our Hoſt'is wyll and his ordinaunce.
There ſhall no fawte be found in me: gode wyl ſhall be
With this I be excuſid of my rudines, [my chaunce:
Alth'o' I cannot peynt my Tale, but tell it as it is,
Lepyng ovir no ſentence, as ferforth as I may,
But tell yewe the yolke and put the white away.

THE MERCH. SECOND TALE;

OR, THE HISTORY OF BERYN.

Whilom yeris paſſid in the old dawis
When rightfullich by reſon governyd wer the lawis,
And pryncipally in the cete of Rome, that was ſo rich,
And worthieſt in his dayes, and noon to hym ilich
Of worſhip ne of wele, ne of governaunce,
For alle londis chriſtened ther'of had doctaunce,
And all othir natiouns, of what feith they were,
Whils the Emperour was hole, and in his paleys there
I mainteyned in honour; and in Pop'is ſe
Rome was then obeied of all Criſtiante.
But it farith ther'by as it doith by othir thingis;
For though nethir cete, regioune, ne kyngis.
Beth nat nowe ſo worthy as wer by old tyme,
As we fynd in romaunces, in geſtis, and in ryme,
For *All things doith waſt, and eke mann'ys lyff*
Ys more ſhorter then it was; and our wittis fyve
Mowe nat comprehende now in our dietes
As ſom tyme myght theſe old wiſe poetes.
But ſith that terrene things ben nat perdurabill,
No mervaile is though Rome be ſomwhat variabill
Fro honour and fro wele ſith his frendis paſſid;
As many anothir town is payrid and ylaſſid
Within theſe few yeris, as we mowe ſe at eye;
Lo! Sirs, here faſt by Wynchelſe and Ry.

But yit the name is evir oon of Rome as it was
groundit
After *Remus & Romulus*, that first that cete foundit,
That brethren weren both to, as old bokis writen;
But of ther lef and governaunce I wol natnow enditen,
But of othir mater that fallith to my mynd;
Wher'for, gentill Sirs, ye that beth behind
Drawith somwhat nere thikker to a rout,
That my wordis may soune to ech man about.
Aftir these 2 brethren Romulus and Remus
Julius Cæsar was Emperour, that rightful was of
This cete he governed nobilich wele, [*Domus*
And conquered many a regioune, as cronicali doth
us telle;
For, shortly to conclude, al tho wer adversaryes
To Rome in his dayis he made them tributaries;
So had he in subjectioune both frend and foon,
Of which I tell yew trewly Englond was oon.
Yit aftir Julius Cæsar, and sith that Crist was bore,
Rome was governed as wele as it was before,
And namelich in that tyme and in the same yeris
When it was governed by the Doseperis;
As semeth wele by reson, who so can entend,
That *O mann'ys wyt ne wyll may not comprehend*
The boucheff and the myscheff, as may many bedis
Ther'for ther operaciouns, ther domes, and ther dedes,
Were so egallich ydoon; for in all Cristen londis
Was noon that they sparid for to mend wrongis.

Then Constantyne the Third, aftir these Dosiperis,
Was Emperour of Rome, and regnyd many yeris.
So, shortly to pas ovir, after Constantyn's dayis
Phūs Augustinus, as son gen is in layes,
That Constantyn'ys son, and of plener age,
Was Emperour ychose, as fill by heritage,
In whose tyme sikerlich the 7 Sages were
In Rome dwellyng decently; and yf yee lust to lere
How they were yclepid, or I ferther goon
I woll tell you the names of them everichone,
And declare yeu the cause why they ther namys bere.
The first was ycleped Sother Legifeer,
This is thus much for to sey, as *man bering the laxee*:
And so he did trewly; for levir he had be sclawe
Then do or sey eny thing that sownyd out of reson,
So cleen was his conscience yset in trowith and reson.
Marcus Stoycus the second, so pepill hym highte,
That is to mene in our constert, *a keper of the right*:
And so he did full trewe; for the record and the plees
He wrote them evir trewly, and took noon othir fees
But such as was ordynid to take by the yere:
Now, Lord God! in Cristendom I wold it were so clere.
The third Crassus Asulus among men clepid was,
An house of rest, and ese, and counsail, in every case:
For to onderstond that was his name full right,
For evirmore the counsails he helpid wyth al his myght.
Antonius Judeus the serth was yclepid,
That was as much to meen, as wele me myght have cle-

As any ppofid of all the long yere, [chere,
That myght have made hym fory or chongit onys
But evirmore rejoycing, what that evir betid,
For his hert was evir mery, right as the fomer bridd.
Summus Philopater was the fifft is name,
That thoughe men wold flee hym, or do hym al the
Angir, or difefe, as evil as men couthe, [fhame,
Yet wold he love them nevir the wers in hert ne in
mowith.
His will was cleen undir his foot, and nothing hym
Ther'for he was clepid *Fathir of perfite love.* [above,
The 6 and the 7 of thefe Sevin Sages
Was Stypio and Sithero; as thes word Aftrolages
Was firname to them both aftir their fciences;
For of aftronomy fikerlich the cours and all the fences
Bothe they knowhit wele inoughe, and wer right fotil
But now to othir purpofe, for her I woll depart [of art.
As lightly as I can, and draw to my matere.
In that fame tyme that thefe Sages were
Dwellyng thus in Room, a litill without the walles,
In the fubarbis of the town, of chambris and of hallis,
And all other howfeing that to a lord belongit,
Was noon wythyn the cete, ne noon fo wele behongit
With dozers of highe pryfe, ne wallid fo abouto,
As was a Senatours hous wythyn and eke wythoute.
Favinus was his name, a worthe man and rich;
And, for to fey fhortlych, in Room was noon hym lyche.
His portis and his eftris were full evenaunte
Of trefour and of lordfhyp; alfo the moft vailant

He was, and eke ycom of high lynage:
And at last he toke a wyff like to his peerage;
For *Norriture and condyng, bewte and parentyne,*
Wer tho counsild more worth than gold or fylvir fyne. 110
But now it is al othir in many mann'ys thought,
For *Muk ys now ymarried and vertu set at nought.*
Fawnus and his worthy wyff wer to gidir aloon
Fyveteene wyntir fullich, and issu had they noon,
Wher'for ther joyis wer nat half perfite, 115
For ettirlich to have a child was al ther delite,
That myght enjoy ther heritage and weld their honour;
And eke when they were febill to their trew socoure.
Their fastyng and their preyir, and all that evir they wrought,
As pilgrimage and almsded, ever they besought 120
That God would of his goodnes som fruyte betwene them send:
Fro gynning of their spousaill, the myddil, and the end,
This was their most besynes, and all othir delites,
And eke this world is rychis, they set at litil price.
So at last, as God wold, it fil oppon a dey, 125
As this lady fro chirchward went in the wey,
A child gan sterre in her womb, as Godd's wyl was,
Wher'of she gan to mervill, and made shortir pas,
Wyth colour pale and eke wanne, and full in hevynes,
For she had nevir tofore that day such manere sekenes.
The wymmen that with her were gon to behold 131
The lady and her chere, but nothing they told,

But feir and ſoft wyth eſe homward they her led:
For her ſoden ſekenes full ſore they were adred,
For ſhe was inlich gentil, kynd and amyabill,
And eke trewe of hert, and nothyng variabill.
She lovid God above all thing, and dredſyn and ſhame,
And Agea ſikerly was her rightfull name.
So aftir, in breff tyme, when it was purſeyvyd
That ſhe had done a womans dede, and had a child conſeyvyd,
The joy that ſhe made ther may no tung tell;
And al ſo much, or more, yf I ne ly ſhell,
Favinus made in his behalf for this glad tyding,
That I trowe I leve the emperour ne the kyng
Made no bettir cher to wyff, ne no more myrth,
Then Fawnus to Agea. And when the tyme of birth
Nyghid ner and ner, aftir cours of kynd,
Wetith wele in certen that all the wyt and mynd
Of Fawnus was continuell of feir delyveraunce
Betwene Agea and his child, and made grete ordenaunce
Ageyn the tyme it ſhuld be bore, as it was for to doon.
So as God wold whan tyme cam Agea had a ſon;
But joy that Fawnus made was dobil tho to fore
When that he knew in certen ſhe had a ſon ybore,
And ſent anoon for nurſis four, and no leſs,
To reule this child. Afterward as yeris did pas
The child was kept ſo tenderly that it throff wel the
For what the norifhes axit anoon it was yfett. [bet,

In his chambir it norisshed was; to town it mut nat go:
Fawnus lovid it so cherely hit myght nat part hym fro.
It was so feyr a creature as myght be on lyve
Of lymys and of fetours, and growe wondir blyve.
This child that I of tell, Berinus was his name,
Was ovir much cherisshed, which turned hym into grame,
As yee shull here aftir, when time comyth and spase;
For *Aftir swete the soure comyth full oft in many a plase:*
For as sone as he coud go and also speke
All that he set his ey on, or aftir list to beke,
Anoon he shuld it have, for no man hym wernyd.
But it had be well bettir he had be wele ylernyd
Noriture and gentilnes, and had yhad some hey;
For it fill so aftir wyth what child he did pley
[illegible] he wold breke his hede.

And thoughe men wold pleyne ful short it shuld availe,
For Fawnus was so myghty, and cheff of all counsaill
With Augustyn the Emperour, that all men hym drad,
And lete pas ovir mischefe and harmys that they had.
Berinus ferthermore lovid wel the dise,
And for to pley at hazard, and held ther of grete pryse,
And all othir gamys that losery was in,
And evirmore he lost, and nevir myght wyn.
Berynus at hazard many a nyght he wakid,
And oft tyme it fill so that he cam hom al nakid:
And that was all his joy, for right wele he knew
That Agea his modir wold cloth hym newe.
Thus Berynus lyvid, as I have told to fore,
Tyll he was of the age of 18 yere or more.
But othir whyls amongis for pleyntis that were grete
Fawnus made amendis, and put them in quiete:

He was, and eke ycom of high lynage:
And at laſt he toke a wyff like to his peerage;
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And eke when they were febill to their trew ſocourc.
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Fro gynning of their ſpouſaill, the myddil, and the end,
This was their moſt beſynes, and all othir delites,
And eke this world'is rychis, they ſet at litil price.
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Anoon he shuld it have, for no man hym wernyd.
But it had be well bettir he had be wele ylernyd
Noriture and gentilnes, and had yhad some hey;
For it fill so aftir wyth what child he did pley
Yf the pley ne likid hym he wold breke his hede,
Or wyth a knyff hym hurt ryght nygh hond to be dede:
For ther nas knyght ne squyer in his sadirs house,
That thought his owne persone moste corajouse,
That did or seyd eny thing Berinus to displese
That he n'old spetously anoon oppon him rese;
Wher'of his sadir had joy and his modir also:
Yit it semeth to many a man it was nat wisely do.
When Beryn passid was 7 yere, and grew in more age,
He wrought ful many an evil chek; for such was his corage
That there he wist or might do eny evill dede
He wold nevir sese for ought that men him seid,
Wher'for many a pore man ful oft was agrevid;
But Fawnus and Agea ful light theron belevid:

And thoughe men wold pleyne ful ſhort it ſhuld availe,
For Fawnus was ſo myghty, and cheff of all counſaill
With Auguſtyn the Emperour, that all men hym drad,
And lete pas ovir miſchefe and harmys that they had.
Berinus ferthermore lovid wel the diſe,
And for to pley at hazard, and held ther of grete pryſe,
And all othir gamys that loſery was in,
And evirmore he loſt, and nevir myght wyn.
Berynus at hazard many a nyght he wakid,
And oft tyme it fill ſo that he cam hom al nakid:
And that was all his joy, for right wele he knew
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Thus Berynus lyvid, as I have told to fore,
Tyll he was of the age of 18 yere or more.
But othir whyls amongis for pleyntis that were grete
Fawnus made amendis, and put them in quiete:
So was the fadir cauſe the ſone was ſo wyld;
And ſo have many mo ſuch of his own child
Be cauſe of his undoyng, al we mowe ſe al day;
For *Thing ytake is hard to put awey,*
As hors that evir trottid, trewlich I yew telle,
It were hard to make hym aftir to ambill welle:
Ryght ſo by Beryn; when he had his luſt and wyll
when he was lite
It ſhuld be hevy afterward to reve his old delite,
Save the whele of Fortune, that no man may with-
For every man on lyve ther'on he is gond; [ſtonde,
O ſpoke ſhe turnyd bakward, righte at high noone,
All ageyn Berinus, as ye ſhull here ſone.

Agea his modir fell in grete ſekenes,
And ſent aftir huſbond wyth wordis hire to lis,
And for ſhe wold tell hym hir hole hert'is wyll
Er ſhe out of the world partid, as it was right and ſkill.
When Fawnus was ycome, and ſaw ſo rodyleſe
Hys wyff that was ſo dere, that for love he cheſe,
No mervell though his hert wer in grete mournyng,
For he purſeyvyd fullich ſhe drewe to hir endyng:
Yit made he othir chere then in his hert was
To put awey diſcomfort, diſſimilyng wyth his faſe
The hevynes of his hert: wyth chere he did it cloſe,
For ſuch a manner craft ther is wyth them can gloſe;
Save that tournythall to cautele: but Fawnus did natſo,
For wetith wele in certeyn his hert was full of wo
For his wyff Agea; and yit for craft he couth
The teris fro his eyin ran doun by his mowith:
When he ſaw the pangis of deth comyng ſo faſt
Oppon his wyff Agea almoſt his hert to braſt.
Agea lyfft up hir eyen, and beheld the chere
Of hir huſbond Fawnus, that was ſo trew a fere,
And ſeyd, Sir, why do ye thus? this is an elying fare
In comfort of us both, yf yee might ſpare
And put awey thys hevynes whyle that yee and I
Myght ſpeke of othir thyngis, for Deth me nyghith
For to body ne to ſoule this vailyth nat a karſe. [nygh,
Now tellyth on, quod Fawnus, and I wol lete it pas
For the time of talkyng as wele as I may,
But out of my remembraunce onto my endyng day

Yeur deth woll nevir, I woot it wele, but evir be in
my mynd.
Then, good Sir, quod Agea, beth to my foule kynd
When my body is out of ſight, for therto have I nede,
For truer make then yee be in word ne in dede
Had nevir woman, ne more kyndnes
Hath ſhewed unto his make, I know right wele iwis:
Now wold ye ſo her after in hert be as trewe,
To lyve wythout make, and on yeur ſone rewe,
That litill hath ylernid ſithens he was bore:
Let hym have no ſtepmodir, for children have tofore
Comelich they lovith nat: wherfor wyth hert I prey
Have chere onto yeur ſone aftir my endyng day;
For ſo God me help and I lafft yew behynd
Shuld nevir man on lyve bryng it in my mynd
To be no more yweddit, but lyve ſoule aloon.
Now yee know all my wyll, good Sir, think ther'on.
Certis, quod Fawnus, whils I have wyttis fyve
I think nevir aftir yew to have another wyff.
The preeſt was com therwythall for to do hir rightis;
Fawnus toke his leve, and all the othir knyghtis,
Hir kyndrid and frendis kiſſed hir echone:
It is no nede to axe wher ther was dole or noon.
Agea caſt her ey up, and lokid all aboute,
And wold have kiſſid Beryn, but then was he wyth-
Pleying to the hazard, as he was wont to doon, [oute,
For as ſone as he had ete he wold ren out anoon;

And when ſhe ſaw he was not ther that ſhe thought moſt on
Hire ſekenes and hire mournyng berſt her hert anoon.
A damſell tofore that was ron into the toune
For to ſeche Beryn, that pleyed for his gowne,
And had almoſt loſt it, right as the damſell cam,
And ſwore and ſtarid as he was wood, as longit to the game.
The damſell ſeyd to Beryn, Sir, ye muſt com home,
For but ye hygh blyve that yee wer ycome
Yeur mothir woll be dede; ſhe is yit on lyve:
Yf ye wol ſpeke wyth her yee muſt hygh blyve.
Who had ſo, lewd Kitt? Your ſadir, Sir, quod ſhe.
Go home, lewd viſenag, that evil mut thow the!
Quod Beryne to the damſell, and gan her fray and feer,
And bad the devill of hell hir ſhould to tere.
Haſt thow ought els to do but let me of my game?
Now by God in hevin, by Peter, and by Jame,
Quoth Beryn in grete angir, and ſwore be book and bell,
Rehersyng many namys mo than me lyſt to tell,
N'er thow my ſadirs meſſenger wer thou ſhuldiſt nevir ete brede:
I had levir my modir and alſo thou wer dede
Then I ſhuld leſe the game that I am nowgh in;
And ſmote the damſell undir the ere, the weet gon upward ſpyn:
The death of Agea he ſet at litill pryſe;
So in that wrath frolick Beryn threw the dyſe,

And loſt wyth that ſame caſt al was leyde adown,
And ſtert up in a wood rage, and ballid on his crown,
And ſo he did the remnaunt, as many as wold abyde;
But for drede of Fawnus his felawis gan to hyde,
And nevir had wyll, ne liſt, wyth Beryn for to fyght,
But evir redy to pley and wyn what they myght.
The deth of Agea ſprang about the towne,
And every man that herd the bell for her ſowne
Bemony'd her full ſore; ſaff Beryn toke none hede,
But ſought another ſeleſhip, and quyklich to them yede,
To ſuch manner company as ſhuld nevir thryve,
For ſuch he lovid bettir then his modir's lyve; [drawe,
And evirmore it ſhuld be nyght or he wold home
For of his fadir in certeyn he had no manner awe;
For evir in his yowith he had al his wyll,
And was ypaſſid chaſtiſing but men wold hym kyll.
Fawnus for Agea, as it was well ſitting,
Made grete ordenaunce for hir burying,
Of prelatis and of preeſtis, and of al othir thyng,
As thoughe ſhe had be a wyff of a worthy king:
It myght nat have be mendit; ſuch was his gentilnes,
For at hir enteryng was many a worthy meſſe.
For four weeks full, or he did her intere,
She ley in lede wythyn his houſe; but Beryn cam not
Namelich into the place where his modir ley, [there,
Ne onys wold he a *Patir noſter* for hir ſoule ſey:
His thought was all in unthryft, lechery, and dyſe,
And drawyng all to foly, for *Yowith is reeblet*

But ther it is refreyned and hath ſom maner eye:
And ther'fore methinkith that I may wele ſey
A man ypaſſid yowith, and is wythout lore,
May be wele lykened to a tre wythout more, [waſt:
That may nat bowe ne bere fruyte, but roote and ever
Ryght ſo by yowith farith that no man liſt to chaſt.
This mowe we knew verely by experience,
That *Yerd makith vertu and benevolence*
In childhode for to growe, as provith ymagynacioune:
A plant whilsit is grene, or it have dominacioune,
A man may wyth his fyngers ply it wher hym lyſt,
And make ther'of a ſhakill, a with, or a twiſt;
But let the plant ſtond, and yeris ovirgrowe,
Men ſhull not wyth both his hondis unnethis make it bowe:
No more myght Fawnus make his ſone Beryn,
When he grew in age, to his lore enclyne:
For every day when Beryn roſe unwaſh he wold dyne,
And draw hym to his felefhip as even as a lyne,
And then com home and ete, and ſoop, and ſclepe at nyght:
This was al his beſynes but yf that he did fight;
Wher'for his fadir's hert Fawnus gan for to blede,
That of his modir that ley at home he toke no more hede:
And ſo did all the pepill that dwellid in the town
Of Beryn's wildnes gon ſpeke and eke roun.
Fawnus oppon a dey, when Beryn cam at eve,
Was ſet oppon a purpoſe to make his ſone leve

All his ſhrewd taichis wyth goodnes if he myght,
And taught hym feir and ſoft, but Beryn toke it light,
And countid at litill pryſe al his fadir's tale.
Fawnus ſaw it wold nat; with colour wan and pale
He partid from his ſone, and wyth a ſorewfull hert.
I ne can write halfyndele how ſore he did ſmert
The diſobeying of his ſone and his wyf's deth,
That, as the book tellith, he wisshed that his breth
Had ybeen above the ſerkill celeſtyne,
So fervent was his ſorowe, his angir, and his pyne.
So, ſhortly to conclude, Agea was interid,
And Fawnus livid wyſles 3 yere wer ywerid,
Wher'of ther was grete ſpeche for his high honour:
Tyll at laſt word cam onto the Emperour
That Fawnus was without wyfe, and feld was jo-
counde,
But mournyng for Agea that he was to ybound,
And lyvid as an hermyte, ſoule and deſtitute,
Wythoue conſolacioune, penſyff oft and mute:
Wher'for Auguſtinus, of Rome the Emperour,
Was inwardlich ſory, and in grete dolour,
Wyth that the 7 Sagis and Senatouris all
Were aſſemblid, to diſcryve what ſhuld ther'of fall;
The wych ſeyd ſhortly, For a moleſtacioune
Ther was noon othir remedy but a conſolacioune;
For *Whoſo wer in eny thing diſpleſid or agrevid*
Muſt by a like thing egall be remevid.
And when the Emperour knew all their determina-
Quicklich in his mynd he had imaginacioune [cioune,

That Fawnus for Agea was in high diſtres,
And muſt ycurid be wyth paſſyng gentilnes
Of ſom luſty lady, that of pulchritude
Were excellent al othir: ſo, ſhortly to conclude,
The Emperour had a love tofore he had a wyf
That he lovid as hertlich as his own lyf,
As was as feir a creature as ſone myght beſhyne;
So excellent of bewte that ſhe myght be ſhryne
To all othir wymmen that wer tho lyvand:
But for the Emperour had a wyf ye ſhul wele onder-ſtond
He cam nat in hir company to have his delite;
For Criſtendome and conſcience was tho more perfite
Then it is now adayis, yf I durſt tell:
But I wol leve at this tyme. Than Fawnus al ſo ſwell
Was aftir ſent in haſt, of ſeknes to be curyd;
So what for drede and ellis they wer both enſuryd
In preſence of the Emperour, ſo Fawnus myght nat flee;
It was the Emperours wyll, it myght noon othir be.
So wythin a tyme Agea was forgete,
For Fawnus thought litill on that he hir behight:
For as the 7 Sagis had afore declarid
It cam all to purpos; for Fawnus litil carid
For eny thing at all ſave his wyff to pleſe,
That Rame was yclepid; for reſt nethir eſe
Fawnus nevir had but of her preſence:
So was his hert on her yſet that he coud no defence,
Save evirmore be wyth hir, and ſtare on hir viſage,
That the moſt part of Room held it for dotage,

And had much marvell of his variaunce:
But *What is that Fortune cannat put in chance?*
For ther n'as man on lyve on woman more bedotid
Then Fawnus was in Rame, ne half so much ysotid.
Wyth that Rame had knowlech that Fawnus was ysmyt
Wyth the dart of Love: yee mowe ryght wele it wyt.
That all that evir she coud cast or ythynck
Was all ageyn Berynus, for many a sotill wrench
She thought and wrought day by day, as meny wemen doon,
Tyll they have of their desire the full conclusioune:
For the more that Fawnus of Rame did made
The more dangerous was Rame and of chere sade,
And kept wele hir purpose undir covirture:
She was the las to blame; it grew of nature.
But though that Rame wrought so, God forbede that
Wer of that condicioune. Yet touch no man the gall,
It is my plein counsell, but doith as othir doith:
Take yeur part as it comith of roughe and eke of smoothe.
Yit noritur, wit and gentilnes, reson and perfite mynde,
Dothadi these worthy women to worch ageny's kynde,
That thoughe they be agrevid they suffir and endure,
And passith ovir for the best, and folowith nothing nature.

But now to Rame's purpoſe, and what was hir deſire.
Shortly to conclude, to make debate and ire
Betwene the ſadir and the ſone, as it was likely tho;
What for his condicioune, and what for love alſo
That Fawnus owt to his wyff, the rathir he muſt hir leve,
And grant for to mend, yf ought hir did greve.
Berinus evir wrought right as he did before,
And Rame made hym chere of love, ther myght no woman more,
And gaff hym gold and clothing evir as he did leſe,
Of the beſt that he coud ought wher in town cheſe,
And ſpeke full feir wyth hym, to make al thyng dede;
Yit wold ſhe have yete his hert wythout ſalt or brede:
She hid ſo hir felony, and ſpak ſo in covert,
That Beryn myght nat ſpy it but lite of Ram'ys hert.
So, ſhortly to pas ovir, it fill oppon a nyghte,
When Fawnus and his freſh wyf wer to bed ydight,
He toke hir in his armys and made hir hertly chere,
Ther myght no man betir make to his fere,
And ſeyd, Myn ertly joy, myn hertis full pleſaunce,
My wele, my woo, my paradiſe, my lyv'is ſuſtenaunce!
Why ne be ye mery, why be ye ſo dull,
Sith ye know I am yeur own right as yeur hert woll?
Now tell on love, myn own hert! yf ye eylith ought,
For and it be in my power anoon it ſhall be wrought.
Rame wyth that gan ſighe, and wyth a wepeing chere
Undid the bagg of trechery, and ſeide in this manere:

No mervell though myn hert be ſore and full of dele,
For when I to yew weddit was wrong went my whele.
But who may be ageyns hap and aventure?
Therfor as wele as I may myne I mut endure.
Wyth many ſharp wordis ſhe ſet his hert on feir
To purchaſe with hir practik that ſhe did deſire:
But hoolich all hir wordis I cannot wele reherſe,
Ne write ne endite how ſhe did perce
Through Fawny's hert and his ſcull alſo;
For more petouſe compleynt of ſorowe and of woo
Made nevir woman, ne more petouſly,
Then Rame made to Fawnys: ſhe ſmote full bitterly
Into the veyn, and through his hert blood;
She bloderit ſo and wept, and was ſo high on mode,
That unneth ſhe myght ſpeke but othir while among
Wordis of diſcomfort, and hir hondis wrong;
For alas and woo the tyme that ſhe weddit was!
Was evir more the frefreit when ſhe myght have ſpaſe.
I am yweddit; ye, God woot beſt in what maner and how!
For yf it wer ſo fall I had a child by you,
Lord! how ſhuld he lyve, how ſhuld he com awey?
Sith Beryn is yeur firſt ſone, and heir aſtir yeur day?
But yf that he had grace to ſcoole for to goo,
To have ſom maner conning that he myght truſt to,
For as it now ſtondeth it were the beſt rede,
For, ſo God me help, I had levir he wer dede
Than wer of ſuch condicioune or of ſuch lore
As Beryn yeur ſone is; it wer bett he wer unbore,

For he doith nat ellis ſave at hazard pley,
And comyth home al nakid ech othir dey;
For within this month that I have wyth yeu be
Fiftene fithis, for verry grete pite
I have yclothid hym al new when he was to tore,
For evirmore he ſcyde the old were ylore.
Now and he wer my ſone I had levir he were yſod,
For and he pley ſo long half our lyvelode
Wold ſcarſly ſuffiſe hymſelf oon,
And n'ere yee wold be grevid, I ſwere be Seynt John
He ſhuld aftir this dey be clothid no more for me,
But he wold kepe them bettir and draw fro nycete.
Now gentill wyff, grāmcy of yeur wiſe tale,
I thynk wel the more that I ſey no fale;
For towchyng my grevaunce, that Beryn goith al na-
Treulich that grevaunce is ſomwhat aſclakid: [kid,
Let hym aloon, I prey yew, and I woll con yew thank,
For in ſuch loſery he hath loſt many a frank.
The devil hym ſpede that rech yf he be to tore,
And he uſe it hereaftir as he hath doon to fore.
Beryn aroſe a morowe, and cried wondir faſt,
And axid aftir clothis, but it was all in waſt;
Ther was no man tendant for hym in all the houſe;
The whele was ychaungit into anothir cours.
Fawnus herd his ſone wele how he began to cry,
And roſe up anoon and to hym did high,
And had forgete nothyng that Rame had yſeyde,
For he boillid ſo his hert he was nat well apayde.

He went into the chambir ther his ſone ley,
And ſet hym down in a chair, and thus he gan to ſey:
My gentil ſone Beryn, now feir I wol ye teche;
Rew oppon thy ſelf, and be thyne own leche.
Manhode is ycom now, myne own dere ſone,
It is tyme thow be aweynyd of thyn old wone:
And thow art 20 wynters, and naught haſt of doctryne;
Yit woldiſt thow draw to perfite the worſhip wold be thyne,
To noritur and goodſhip, and al honeſt thing,
Ther myght com to myn hert no more glad tyding.
Leve now al thy foly and thy rebawdry,
As tablis and mervellis, and the hazardry,
And draw the to the company of honeſt men and good,
Els leve thow me as wele as Criſte died on the rode;
And for al menkynd his ghoſt pas lete,
Thow ſhalt for me heraftir ſtond on thyn own fete,
For I woll no longir ſuffir this aray
To clothe the al new eche othir dey.
Yf thow wolt draw the to wit, and rebawdry with-[draw,
Of ſuch good as God have ſent yn part have ſhalt thow:
And yf thow wolt nat, my ſone, do as I the tell,
Of me ſhalt thow naught have, truſt me right well.
Wenyſt thow wyth thy diſe-pleying hold myn honoure
Aftir my deth dey? Then Beryn gan to loure,
And ſeide, Is this a ſermon or a prechement?
Ye were nat wont herto; how is this ywent?

Sendith for ſome clothing that I wer ago;
My ſelawis lokith aftir me, I woot well they do ſo:
I woll nat leve my feleſhip ne my rekelagis,
Ne my diſe-pleying, for all yeur heretages:
Doith yeur beſt wyth them by yeur lyf day,
For when they fall to me I wol do as I may.
Benedicite! fadir, who hath enformyd you,
And ſet you into ire, to make me chere rowe?
But I know wele inough whens this counſaill cam;
Trewlich of yeur own wyfe, that evil dame:
Com oppon hir body that fals putaigne, [ſeyne.
For trewlich, fadir, yee dote on hir, and ſo all men
Alas that evir a man ſhuld, that is of high counſaile,
Set all his wyſdom on his wyv'is taile!
Yee lovith hir ſo much ſhe hath benome yeur wyt,
And I may curs the tyme that evir ye wer yknyt,
For now I am in certen I have a ſtepmodir:
They been ſhrewis, ſom ther been, but few, othir.
Vel Fikil Flaptail, ſuch oon as ſhe ya,
For all my pleying at diſe yit do yee more amys:
Yee have yloſt yeur name, yeur worſhip, and yeur
So dote ye on hir, and levith all ſhe ſayith. [ſeith,
Fawnus wyth the ſame word gaff the chayir a but,
And lepe out of the chambir, as who ſeyd Cut,
And ſwore in verrey woodnes be God omnipotent
That Beryn of his wordis ſhuld ſore repent.
Beryn ſet nought ther'of, with a proude hert
Anſwerd his fadir, and axid a new ſhert.

He gropid al about to have found oon,
As he was wont tofore, but ther was noon.
Then toke he ſuch willokis as he fond ther,
And beheld hymſelf what man he wer;
For when he was arayde then gan he firſt be wrothe,
For his womb lokid out and his rigg both.
He ſtert aftir his fadir, and he began to cry,
For ſeth myn aray, for the villany
Ys as wele yeurs as it is myne.
Fawnus let him clatir and cry wel and fyne,
And paſſid forth ſtill and ſpak nat a word.
Then Beryn gan to think it was nat al bord
That his fadir ſeyde when he wyth hym was,
And gan to think all about, and therwyth ſeid Alaſs!
Now know I wele forſoth that my modir is dede;
For tho gan he to glow firſt a ſory mann'ys hede.
Now kepe thy cut, Beryn, for thou ſhalt have a fit,
Somwhat of the world to lern betir wit;
For and thow wiſt ſikerly what ys for to com
Thow woldiſt wiſh aftir thy deth full oft and ylome;
For *Ther n'ys betying half ſo ſore wyth ſtaff nethir ſwerd*
As man to be bete with his own yerd.
The pyry is yblowe, hop, Beryn, hop,
That ripe wol heraftir and on thyn hede drop:
Thou tokiſt noon hede whils it ſhoon hoot,
Ther'for wynter the nyghith aſay by thy cote.
Beryn for ſhame to town durſt he nat go, [his ſoo.
He toke his wey to churchward; his frend was made

For angir, ſorowe, and ſhame, and hevynes, that he
Unneth he might ſpeke, but ſtode half as mad. [had,
O alas! quod Beryn, what wyt had I
That coud nat tofore this dey know ſikerly
That my modir dede was? but now I know to ſore,
And drede more that eche dey hereaftir more and more
I ſhall know and fele that my modir is dede.
Alas! I ſmote the meſſangere, and toke of hir noon
Alas! I am right pore; alas! that I am nakid: [hede:
Alas! I ſclept to faſt, tyl ſorowe now hath me wakid:
Alas! I hungir ſore; alas! for dole and peyn,
For eche man me ſeith hath me in diſdeyn.
This was all his mirth to the churchward
That of his modir Agea he toke ſo litill reward.
When Beryn was within the chirch then gan he wers
As ſone as he ſaw the tomb where his modir lay [fray:
His colour gan to chaunge into a dedely hew:
Alas, gentil modir! ſo kynd you wer and trew,
It is no mervell for thy deth though I ſore ſmert.
But therewythal the ſorowe ſo fervent ſmote his hert
That ſodenly he fil down ſtan dede in ſwowe:
That he had part of ſorowe methinkith that myght I
Beryn lay ſo long or he myght awake, [avowe.
For al his fyve wittis had clene hym forſake,
Wel myght he by hymſelf, when reſon ycom were,
Undirſtond that Fortune had a ſharp ſpere,
And eke grete power among high and lowe,
Som to avaunce and ſom to ovirthrowe.

So at laſt when Beryn a litill wakid were
He trampelid faſt with his fete, and al to tare his ere
And his viſage both, right as a wodeman,
With many a bitir tere that from his eyen ran,
And ſighid many a ſore ſigh, and had much hevynes,
And evirmore he curſid his grete unkyndnes
To foreyit his modir whils ſhe was alyve,
And lenyd to hir tombe opon his tore ſclyve,
And wisſhid a thowſand ſithis he had ybe hir by,
And beheld hir tombe with a petouſe eye. [of nought,
Now, glorious God! quod Beryn, that al thing madiſt
Heven and erth, man and beſte, ſith I am myſwrought
Of yewe I axe mercy, ſocour, and help, and grace,
For my myſdede and foly, unthryffe and treſpaſe: 630
Set my ſorowe and peyn ſomwhat in meſure
Fro diſpeir and myſcheff as I may endure.
Lord of all lordis! though Fortune be my foo
Yit is thy myght above to turn hym to and fro.
Firſt my modirs lyfe Fortune hath me berevid, 635
And ſith my fadirs love, and nakid alſo me levid.
What may he do more? Yis, take awey my lyfe;
But for that wer myn eſe, and end of al ſtryfe,
Ther'for he doith me lyve for my wers I ſey,
That I ſhuld evirmore lyve and nevir for to dey. 640
Now leve I Beryn with his modir tyl I com aye,
And wol return me to Rame, that of hir fotilte
Bethoughte hir al aboute, when Beryn was agoon
That it ſhuld be wittid hir, wher'for ſhe anoon 644

In this wiſe ſeyd to Fawnus: Sir, what have ye do,
Althoughe I ſpeke a mery word, to ſuffir your ſone go
Nakid into the town? it was nat my counſail.
What wol be ſeyd ther'of? ſikir without faile,
For I am his ſtepmodir, that I am cauſe of alle
The violence, the wrath, the angir, and the gall,
That is betwene yew both, it wol be wit me;
Wher'for I prey you hertly doith hym com hom aye.
Nay, by trowith, quod Fawnus, for me comyth he nat
Sithe he of my wordis ſo litil priſe ſet [yit;
As litil ſhall I charge his eſtate alſo:
Sorowe have that rechith though he nakid go,
For every man knowith that he is nat wiſe;
Wher'for may be ſuppoſid his pleying at diſe
Is cauſe of his aray, and nothyng yee, my wyff.
Yes, iwis, quod Rame, the tale woll be ryff
Of me and of noon othir, I know right wel afyne;
Wher'for I prey you, gentil Sir, and for love myn,
That he wer yſet hom, and that in grete haſt,
And let aſay oſit ageyn with feirnes hym to chaſte;
And ſend Beryn clothis and a new ſhert;
And made al wele in eche ſide, and kept cloſe her hert.
Now ſith it is yeur wyll, quod Fawnus tho anoon,
That Beryn ſhall home com, for yeur ſake aloon
I woll be the meſſager to put your hert in eſe;
And els, ſo God me help, wer it nat yew to pleſe
The gras ſhuld grow on pament or I hym home bryng.
Yet nethirles forth he went, wyth too or thre riding,

From o ſtrete to anothir, enquerynge to and fro
Aftir Beryn in every plaſe wher he was wont to go,
Seching eviry halk howris too or thre,
With hazardours, and othir ſuch, ther as he was wont to he,
And fond hym nat ther; but to chirch went echone,
And at dorr they ſtode a while and herd Beryn made his mone:
They herd all his compleynt, that petouſe was to here.
Fawnus into the chirch pryvelych gan pire,
But al ſo ſone as he beheld wher Agea lay
His teris ran down be his chekis, and thus he gan to ſey:
A, Agea! myn old love, and my new alſo!
Alas, that evir our hertis ſhuld depart atoo!
For in your gracioufe dayis of hert is trobilnes
I had nevir knowlech, but of all gladnes;
Remembryng in his hert, and evir gan renewe
The goodnes betwene them both, and hir hert trewe,
And drew hym ner to Beryn with an hevy mode:
But as ſone as Beryn knew and ondirſtode
That it was his fadir he wold no longir abide,
But anoon he voidit by the todir ſide,
And Fawnus hym encountrid, and ſeyd, We have the ſought.
Through the town, my gentil ſone, and ther for void the nought.
Though I ſeyd a word or two, as me thought for the beſt
For thyne erudicioune, to draw the onto lyfe honeſt,

Thou ſhuldiſt nat ſo fervently have take it to thyn hert:
But ſith I know my wordis doith the ſo ſore ſmert
Shall no more hereaftir; and eche dey our diete
Shall be mery and ſolafe, and this ſhall be forgete;
For wele I woot for thy modir that thou art to tore,
Alſo thou haſt grete ſorowe, but onys nedith, and nó more:
And ther'for, ſone, on my bleſſing to put ſoroweaway;
Drawe the nowe heraftir to honeſt myrth and pley.
Lo ther is clothing for yewe, and yeur hors ydight
Wyth harneys all freſhe new; and if yee liſt be knyght
I ſhall yit or eve that bergeyn undirtake, [make;
That the Emperour for my love a knyght ſhall you
And what that evir ye nede anoon it ſhall be bought,
For whilsthat I have eny thing ye ſhall lak naught.
Graunt mercy! quod Beryn with an hevy chere,
Of yeur worſhipfull profir that ye have proferid me here:
But ordir of knyghthode to take is nat my liking:
And ſith yeur will is for to do ſomwhat my pleſing,
Ye have a wyfe ye love wele, and ſo tendirlich,
That and ſhe have childrin I know right ſikerlich
All that ſhe can devyſe both be nyght and dey
Shall be to make her childryn heirs of that ſhe may,
And eke ſowe ſedis of infelicite, [me:
Wher'of wold growe devyſioune betwene yewe and
For yf ye ſpend on me yeur good, and thus riallich
Levith wele, in certen yeur wyfe woll ſikerlich
Eche dey for angir her tuſkis whet, [ſet
And to ſmyte with her tunge, yeur hert in wrath to

Toward me from dey to dey, but ye wold aply
Somwhat to hir purpose and aftir hir yew guy;
She wold wex so ovirtwart and of so lither tach,
And evir lour undir her hood a redy for to snathe;
She wold be shortyng of yeur lyfe, and that desire I naught:
Wher'for to plese all about, my purpose and my thought
Is for to be a Marchaunte, and leve myne heritage,
And relese it for evir, for shyppia fyve of stage
Full of marchaundise the best of all this londe:
And yf ye wol so, sadir, quyk let make the bonde.
Fawnus was right well apayd that ilk word outstert,
But yit he seyd to Beryn, I mervell in myn hert
Wher haddist thou this counshile to leve thyne honour,
And lyve in grete aventure and in grete labour;
And rid so forth talkyng a soft esy pase
Homward to his place ther that Ranie was.
And as sone as Fawnus was ylight adown,
And highid fast to his wyfe, and with hir gan to rown,
And told hir all the purpose, and made Fawnus chere,
She did hym nat half so much the tyme she was his fere.
She hullid hym, and mollid hym, and toke hym about the nekk,
And went low for the hite, and made many a bekk;
And seyd, Sir, by yeur spech now right well I here
That yf ye list ye mowe do thing that I most desire;

And that is this, yeur heritage there yeu beſt likid
That ye myght gyve: and evir among the brusſh a-
wey ſhe pikid
From hir clothis here and there, and ſighid therwith-
Fawnus of his gentilnes by hir myddil ſmale [all.
Hertlich hir bracyd, and ſeyd; I woll nat leve,
I ſuyr yew my trowith that onys or it be eve
That I ſhall do my devoir without feintiſe
For to pleſe your hert fullich in all wyſe. [mekely,
Graunt mercy! myn own ſoverene, quod Rame tho
And made proteſtatioune that ſhe ſhuld ſikerly
All the dayis of hir lyfe be to hym as hende
As evir woman was to man, as ferforth as hir mynd
And wit hir wold ſerve, and made grete othe.
Fawnus bood no longir, but forth therwith he goith.
A! precious God in heven, Kyng of majeſte!
So plentivouſe this world is of iniquite!
Why is to yſuffrid that trowith is brought adoun
Wyth trechery and falſkede in feld and eke in toun? [met
But now to Fawnus and his entent. When he his ſone
Hetoke hym ſoft by the hond; his tung he gan to whet,
Sotilly to engyne him. Firſt he gan to preche,
Leve thy ſoly, my dere ſone, and do as I the teche:
Sith thou haſt wit and reſon, and art of mann'ys age,
What nedith the be Marchaunt and ſhall have heri-
tage?
For and thy good wer yloſt the ſorowe wold be myne,
To tell the ſoth, right nigh peregall to thyne;

And yf that I were dede whils thow wer oute
Lond and rent, and all my good, have thou no doute,
It wold be plukkid from the; thy part wold be left;
And alſo ferthermore, I make oon beheeſt,
That I trowe my moblis wol nat ſuffiſe
To charge fyve ſhippis ful of marchandiſe
But yf I leyd in mortgage my lond and eke my rent,
And that I leve be nat thy wyll ne thyn entent:
Yit nethirles yf thy hert be ſo inly ſet
For to be a Marchaunt, for nothing woll I let
That I n'yl do thy pleſaunce as ferforth as I mey
To go ryght nygh myn own eſtate, but levir I had nay.
Their wordis ne their dedis, ne matters them betwene,
I wol nat tary now ther'on my perchemen to ſpene:
But fynallich, to the end of their accordèment,
Fawnus had ſo goon about, yturned and ywent,
That he had brought his ſone tofore the Emperour,
To releſe his heritage and al his honour,
That he ſhuld have aftir his dey, for ſhippis fyve, and
Yled of marchaundiſe of lynnyn and of wool, [full
And of othir thingis that wer yuſid tho,
Engroſid was the covenaunt betwene them to
Yn preſence of the Emperour, in opyn and no rown,
Tofore the gretiſt Cenators and eldeſt of the town.
So when the releſe ſelid was with a ſyde bonde
They wer yleyd both in a meen honde
Into the tyme that Beryn fullich ſeſid were
In the fyve ſhippis that I yew told ere.

But who was glad but Fawnus? and to his wyff went
And ſeyd, Now, my hert's ſwete! allthyn hole entent
Yis uttirlich perfourmyd; as lakkith now no more
But marchaundiſe and ſhippis, as I told tofore.
That ſhall not faill, quod Rame, and began to daunce,
And aftirward they ſpeken of the purveaunce.
Alas! this jals world, ſo ful of trechery!
In whom ſhuld the ſone have truſt and feith ſikirly
If his fadir faylid hym? whether myght he go
For to fynd a ſikir frend that he myght truſt to?
So when theſe 5 ſhippis wer rayid and dight
Fawnus and his ſone to the Emperour ful right
They went, and many a grete man for the ſame caſe,
To ſee both in poſſeſſioune, as their covenaunte was.
Beryn firſt was ſeſid in the ſhippis fyve,
And Fawnus had the releſe, and bare it to his wyff;
And eche held them payde, and Rame beſt of all,
For ſhe had conquerd thing that cauſid moſt hir gall.
Now leve I Fawnys and his wyff, and of the governaunce
Of Beryn I wol ſpeke, and alſo of his chaunce.
When lodiſmen and maryneris in al thing redy was
This Beryn into Alliſaunder, yf God wold ſend hym grace
That wynde hym wold ſerve, he wold: ſo on a day
The wynd was good, and they ſeylid on their wey
Too dayis fullich, and a nyght therwythal,
And had wedir at wyll, tyll at laſt gan fall
Such a myſt among them that no man myght ſe othir,
That wele was hym that had ther the bleſſing of his modir.

For thre dayis inceſſantly the derknes among them was,
That no ſhipp myght ſe othir; wherfor full oft Alas!
They feyd, and to the high God they made their preyere,
That he wold of his grace them govern and ſtere
So that their lyvis myght yſavid be,
For they were cleen in diſpeyr, becauſe they myght nat ſe
The loder, wherby theſe ſhipmen ther courſtoke echone.
So at laſt, the ferth dey, making thus hir mone,
The dey gan clere; and then ſuch wynd aroſe
That blew their ſhippis elſwhere then was their firſt purpoſe.
The tempeſt was ſo huge and ſo ſtrong alſo,
That wele was hym that coude bynde or ondo
Any rope within the ſhipp that longit to the craft;
Every man ſhewid his connyng to fore the ſhipp and bafft.
The wynd a wook the ſee to braſt, it blew ſo greſly
That Beryn and all his company of ſynnys las and more
Eche man round about ſhroff hym ſelf to othir,
And put in Godd'is gowernaunce lyf, ſhipp, and ſtore.
For ther was ſhippis meyne, for owght they coud hale,
That myght abate of the ſhipp the thiknes of a ſcale;
The wedir was ſo fervent of wynd and eke of thundir
That every ſhipp from othir was blowe of ſight aſondir,

And durid so al day and nyght, tyll on the morowe
I trow it was no queſtioune wher they had joy or so-
rowe.
So aftirward, as God wold, the wynd was somwhat soft,
Beryne clepid a maryner, and bad hym sty on loft,
And weyte aftir our four shippis aftir us doith dryve,
For it is but grace of God yf they be alyve.
A maryner anoon wyth that, right as Beryn bad,
Styed into the top castell, and brought hym tydings
glad:
Sir, he seith, beth mery; yeur shippis comith echone
Saff and sound sailing, as ye shul se anoon;
And eke, Sir, ferthermore, lond also I sigh,
Let draw our cors estward, thys tyde woll bryng us ny.
Blessed be God! quod Beryn, then wer our shippis com,
We have no nede to dout werr ne molestatioune,
For there n'ys wythin our shippis no thyng of spolia-
tioune,
But al trew marchaundise; wherefor for lodisman
Stere onys into the costis as well as thou can;
When our shippis be ycom, that we mowe pas in fere,
Lace on a bonnet or tweyn, that we mowe saile nere.
And when they wer the costis nygh was noon of them
alle
That wist what lond it was: then Beryn gan to calle
Out of every ship anoon a maryner or tweyne
For to take counsell, and thus he gan to seyne:
The fronntis of this ilk town been wondir feir wythall,
Methinkith it is the best rede, what that evir befall,

That I my ſelf alone walk into the towne,
And here and ſe both her and there, upward and downe,
And enquere fullich of their governaunce.
What ſey ye Sirs? woll ye ſent to this ordenaunce?
All they accordit well therto and held it for the beſt,
For thus yf it be profitabill we mowe abide and reſt,
And yf it be othirwiſe the rathir ſhall we go,
For aftir that the ſpede we woll werk and do.
But nowe mowe ye her right a wondir thing
In all the world wyde ſo fals of their lyvyng
Was no pepill undir ſone, ne none ſo diſceyvabill,
As was the pepill of this town, ne more unſtabill,
And had a curſed uſage of ſotill ymaginacioune,
That yf ſo wer the ſhippis of any ſtraunge nacioune
Were com into the port, anoon they wold them hide
Within their own howſis, and no man go ne ryde
In no ſtrete of alle the town; afcaunce that they wer lewde,
And coud no ſkill of marchandiſe, a ſkill it was a ſhrewde,
As ye ſhull here aftir of their wrong and falſhede;
But yit it fill, as worthy was, oppon their own hede.
Beryn arayd hym freſhly, as to a Marchand longith,
And ſet hym on a palfrey wel be ſey and hongit,
And a page rennyng by his hors fete:
He rode endlong the town, but no man coud he meet;
The dorrys wer yclofid in both too ſidis,
Wherof he had mervell: yet ferthermore he ridis,

And waytid on his right hond a mancipil's plase
All fresh and new, and thidir gan he pase:
The gatis wer wyde up, and thidir gan he go,
For throughout the long town he found so no mo.
Ther in dwellid a burgeyse the most seliper man
Of all the town throughout, and what so he wan
With trechery and gile, as doith som freris,
Right so must he part with his comperis.
Beryn light down on his hors, and inward gan he dres,
And fond the good man of the house pleying at chess
With his neyghbour, as trewe as he, that dwellid hym fast by.
But as sone as this burgeyse on Beryn cast his eye
Sodenly he stert up, and put the chess hym fro,
And toke Beryn by the hond, and seyd these wordis tho;
Benedicite! what manere wynd hath ybrought you here?
Now wold to God I had wherof, or coud make yew chere!
But ye shull lowe my good wyll, and take such as ther is,
And of yeur gentil paciens suffir that is amys.
For well he wist by his aray and by his countenaunce
That of the shippis that wer ycom he had som governaunce,
Wherfor he made hym chere semeyng amaybill,
Icolerid all with tautelis, and wondir disseyvabill:
He bracyd hym by the myddil, and preyd hym sit adoun,
And lowly with much worshipp dressid his cosshon.

Lord God! seyd this burgeyse, I thank this ilke dey
That I shuld see yew hole and sound here in my contray;
And yf ye list to tell the cause of yewr comyng,
And yf he have nede to any manere thing,
And it be in my power, and thoughe I shuld it seche,
It shuld go right wonder streyte, I sey yew sikerlich,
But yee it had in haste, therwith yew plese;
For now I see yew in my house my hert is ingrete ese.
The todir burgeyse rose hym up for to make rouse,
And axid of his felaw, that lord was of the house,
Whens is this worshipfull man? with wordis hend and low,
For it semith by the manere that ye hym shuld knowe,
And have sey hym tofore this tyme, I have sene, quod the todir,
Ye ywis an 100 sithis, and right as to my brodir
I wol do hym plesaunce in al that evir I can,
For trewlich in his contray he is a worshipful man:
Forsoth, Sir, and for yeur love, a thousand in this town
Wold do hym worship, and be right seyne and bown
To plese hym, and avail to have thonk of you:
I woot wele, God them yeld, so have they of er nowe.
And arose up therwithall, and with his felaw spak
Of such manere mater that saylid nevir of lakk.
So when their counsell was ydo this burgeyse preyd his fere
To sit a down be Beryn, and do hym sport and chere,

And in the while I wol se to his hors,
For every gentil hert, afore his own cors
Desirith that his riding best be servid and ydight
Rathir than hymself; wherfor wythall my myght
I woll have an eye therto; and sich parte wyyn
Wich tonne or pipe is best and most fyne.
Beryn was all abashid of his foden chere,
But nethirles the burgeyse sat hym somwhat nere,
And preyd hym of his gentilnes his name for to tell,
His contrey and his lynnage: and he answer'd snell,
Berinus I am ynamid, and in Rome ybore,
And have fyve shippis of myn own, las and more,
Full of marchaundise, ligging tofore the town;
But much marvaile have I the good man is so boun
To serve me and plese, and how it might be.
Sir, seyd the burgeyse, no mervelle it is to me,
For many a tyme and oft, I cannot sey how lome,
He hath be in your marchis; and as I trow in Roome
Also he was ybore, yf I ne ly shall.
Yf it be so, quod Beryn, no mervelle it is at all
Thoughe he me have ysey, and eke his gentill chere
Previth it all opynly; but be hym that bought me dere
I have ther'of no knowlech, as I am now avysid.
With that cam in the good man with countenaunce disgisid,
And had enqueryd of the child that with Beryn cam
Fro gynnyng to the endyng, and told his mastris name,

And of Agea his modir, and all thing as it was, [cass
Wher-through he was ful perfite to anſwere to every
So entryng into the hall the burgeys ſpak anoon,
A! my gentill Beryn, alas! that under ſtonne
Myne own hert Agea, thy modir leff and dere!
Now God aſſoyl hir ſoule, for nevir bettir chere
Had I of frend woman, ne nevir half ſo good.
Benedicite! a Marchaunt comyng ovir flood!
Who brought yew in this purpos, and beth your fadir's heir?
Now by my trew conſcience ryght nygh in diſpeyr
I wax for yeur ſake, for now frendleſe
Ye mowe wele ſey that ye been; but yit for nethirles
Yee mut endure fortune, and hevynes put awey;
Ther is noon othir wiſdom. Alſo yeur ſhippis gey,
That been ycom in ſavete, ought to amend yeur mode,
The wich when we have dyned, I ſwete for by the rood,
We wol ſe them trewly within and eke without,
And have wyne wyth us and drynk al about.
They ſet and wiſſh, and fed them, and had wherof plente; [deynte.
The burgeyſe was a ſtuffid man, ther lakkid noon
So when they had ydined the cloth was up ytake,
A cheſe ther was ybrought forth, but tho gan ſorowe to wake.
The ches was all of ivory, the meyne freſſh and new,
I pulſhid and ypikid of white, aſure, and blew.

Beryn beheld the checker, it semed passyng feir;
Sir, quod the burgeyse, ye shul synd her a payr
That woll mate yew trewly in las than half a myle,
And was yseyd of sotilte Beryn to begile.
Now in soth, quod Beryn, it myght wel hap nay,
And n'er I must my shippis se els I wold assay.
What nedith that, quod the burgeyse? trewlich I wol nat glose,
They been nat yit yfetelid ne fixid in the wose;
For I have sent thries sith ye hithir cam
To wait oppon their governaunce; wher'for let set o game,
And I shall be the first that shall yew atast,
The meyne wer yset up, and gon to pley fast.
Beryn wan the first, the second, and the third,
And at fourth game' in the ches amyd
The burgeyse was ymatid; but that lust him wele;
And all was doon to bryng hym yn, as ye shul her snel.
Sir, then, seyd Beryn, ye woot well how it is,
Me list no more to pley, for yee know this,
Wher is noon comparisoun, of what thing so it be,
Lust and liking fallith ther: as it semeth me
Ne myrth is nat commendabill that ay is by o side,
But it rebound to the tothir; wherfor tyme is to ryde;
And as many thonkis as I can or may
Of my sport and chere, and also of yeur pley.
Nay iwis, gentill Beryn, I woot ye wol nat go,
For noritur wol it nat for to part so,
And eke my condicioune; but I ley somthing
Is no more to pley then who so shoke a ryng

Ther no man is wythyn the ryngyng to answere;
To shete a fethirles bolt almost as good me were:
But and ye wold this next game som manir wager legg,
And let the trowith on both sidis be morgage and
That whoso be ymatid graunt and assent [yplegg,
To do the todirs bidding, and whoso do repent
Drynk all the watir that salt is of the see.
Beryn belevid that he coud pley betir than he,
And sodinly assentid, with hond in hond assurid.
Men that stode besides, ycappid and yhurid.
Wist wele that Beryn shuld have the wers mes,
For the burgeyse was the best pleyer at ches
Of all the wyde marchis, or many a myle about;
But that ne wyst Beryn of, ne cast ther'of no doute:
He set the meyne efft ageyn, and toke betir hede
Then he did tofore; and so he had nede.
The burgeyse toke avisement long on every draught,
So wyth an hour or too Beryn he had ycaught
Somwhat oppon the hipp, that Beryn had the wers.
And albeit his mynd and wyll was for to curs,
Yit must he dure his fortune when he was so fer ygo;
For *Who is that that Fortune may alway undo?*
And namelich stout even in eche side
Of *pro* and *contra:* but God help down woll he glide.
But now a word of philosophy that fallith to my mynd;
Who take hede of the begynnyng what fal shall of the end
He leyth a busshe tofore the gap ther Fortune wold in rydes.
But comynlich yowith forgetith that throughout the
world wyde.

Right so be Beryn I may wele sey that consaillis in [nakid,
Likly to lose his marchaundise, and go hymself al [nakid:
Beryn studied in the ches, although it nought availid;
The burgeyse in the mene while with othir men consaillid
To sech the serganntis in the town for thing he had [ado.
So when they com were they walkid to and fro
Up and down in the hall, as skaunce they knew nought;
And yit of all the purpose, wit, and mynd, and thought,
Of the untrew burgeyse, by his messengeris
They wer ful enformyd: wherfor with eye, and eris,
They lay await full doggidly Beryn to aresst, [and hest,
For ther for they wer after sent, and was their charge.
Lord! how should o sely lomb among wolvis weld,
And scape unyharmyd? it hath been seyn seld.
Kepe thy cut now, Beryn, for thow art in the case.
The hall was full of pepill, the serjauntis shewid their [mase;
Beryn kast up his hede, and was ful sore amayid,
For then he was in certen the burgeyse had hym betrayde.
Draw on, seyd the burgeyse; Beryn, ye have the wers;
And every man to othir the covenaunt gan reherse.
The burgeys, whils that Beryn was in hevy thought,
The next draught after he toke a rook for nought.
Beryn swat for angir, and was in hevy plight,
And drede full sore in hert; for wele he wist al quyt

He ſhuld nat eſcape, and was in high diſtreſs;
And pryvelich in his hert that evir he ſaw the ches
He curſid the day and tyme: but what avaylid that?
For wele he wiſt then that he ſhuld be mate:
He gan to chaunge his colour both pale and wan.
The burgeyſe ſeith; Comyth nere, ye ſhul ſe this man
How he ſhull be matid with what man me liſt.
He drought and ſeyd, Chek mate. The ſerjauntis wer full preſt,
And ſeſid Beryn by the ſcleve, and ſeyd, Sirs, what think ye for to do,
Quod Beryn to the ſerjauntis, that ye me hondith ſo?
Or what have I offendit? or what have I ſeide?
Trewlich, quod the ſerjauntis, it vaylith nat to breyde;
Wyth us ye muſt a while wher ye wol or no
Toforethe ſteward of this town; aryſe, and trus and go;
And ther it ſhal be openyd how wiſely thow haſt wrought:
This is the end of our tale, make it nevir ſo tought.
Sirs, farith feir, ye have no nede to hale.
Pas forth, quod the ſerjauntis, we wol nat her thy tale.
Yis, Sirs, of yeur curteſy I prey yew of o word:
Although my gentill hooſt hath pleyed with me in borde,
And ywon a wager, ye have naught to doon:
That is between hym and me; ye have nothyng to doon.
The hooſt made an hidouſe cry, in geſolreut the haut,
And ſet his hand in kenebowe, he lakkid nevir a faute.
Weynſt thow, ſeid he to Beryn, for to ſcorne me?
What evir thow ſpeke, or ſtroute, certis it woll nat be.

Of me shalt thow have no wrong: pas forth a bet ir pase;
In presence of our steward I woll tell my case.
Why, hoost, sey yee this in ernest or in game? 1110
Ye know my contray, and my modir, my lynnage,
and my name;
And thus ye have yseyd me X sith on this dey.
Ye, what though I seyd so? I know wele it is nay:
Ther lyth no more ther'to. But another tyme 1114
Leve me so much the les when thow comest by me;
For all that evir I seyd was to bryng the in care,
And now I have my purpose I woll nothyng the spare.
Thus janglyng to ech othir, endenting every pase,
They entrid both into the hall ther the steward was:
Evandir was his name, that sotill was, and so fell,
He must be well avised tofore hym shuld tell. 1121
Another burgeyse wyth hym was, provost of the cete,
That Hanyhald was yclepid, but of sotilte
He passid many another, as ye shul here sone.
Berynus hoost gan to tell al thyng as it was doon 1125
Fro gynnyng to the endyng, the wordis wyth the dede,
And how they made their covenaunt, and wager how
they leyd. [tale,
Now Beryn, quod the steward, thow hast yherd this
How and in what manere thou art ybrought in bale;
Thow must do his byddyng, thow maist yn no wyse
Or drynk all the watir that salt is in the see: [flee,
Of these too thingis thow must chese the toon;
Now be well avysid, and sey thy will anoon,

To do yee both law I may no betir fey,
For thow shalt have no wrong, as ferforth as I mey:
Chese the selfright as the list, and wit thow nothing me
Though thow chese the wers and let the betir be.
Beryn stode astonyd, and no mervaill was,
And preyd the steward of a dey to answere to the cause;
For I might lightlich in som word be ycaught,
And eke it is right herd to chese of to that beth right naught:
But and it wer yeur likyng to graunt me day tyl to morowe
I wold answer through Godd'is help. Then must thow fynd a borowe,
Seyd the steward to Beryn, and yit it is of grace.
Now herith me, quod Hanybald, I preya litil space:
He hath 5 shippis ondir the town, lyggyng on the strond,
The wich been sufficiant ysesid in our hond; By me that am yeur provost to execute the law.
He must assent. Quod Evander, Let us onys here his saw.
I graunt wele, quod Beryn, sith it may be noon othir.
Then Hanybald arose hym up to sese both ship and strothir,
And toke Beryn wyth hym: so talkyng on the wey,
Beryn, quod Hanybald, I suyr the be my fey
That thow art much ybound to me this ilk dey,
So is thy ple amendit by me; and eke of such a wey
I am avysid in thy cause, yf thow wolt do by rede,
That lite or nought by my counsaill ought the to drede.
Yee know wele to morowe the dey of ple is set
That ye mut nedis answere, or els wythout lett

I muſt yeld them yeur ſhippis; I may in no wyſe blyn;
So have I undirtake: but the merchaundiſe wythin
Is nat in my charge, ye knowe as wele as I,
To make ther'of no lyvery: wher'for now wyſely
Worch, and do aftir rede: let all yeur marchaundiſe
Be voidit of yeur ſhippis, and at hieſt priſe
I wol have it every dele in covenaunt; yf ye liſt
To ſe myne houſe here onys tofore, I hold it for the beſt,
Wher ye ſhull ſe of divers londis, houſis to or thre
Full of marchaundiſe, that through this grete cete
Is no ſuch in preve, I may right well avowe.
So when ye have all ſeyn, and I have yeur alſo,
Let ſom bargen be ymade betwene us both too.
Graunt mercy! Sir, quod Beryn, yeur profir is feir and good;
Feyn wold I do ther'aftir yf I ondirſtood
I myght wythout blame of breking of areſt.
Yis, quod Hanybald, at my perell me truſt.
So to Hanybald's houſe togidir both they rode,
And fond, as Hanybald had yſeyd, an houge houſe, long and brode,
Full of marchaundiſe as rich as it may be,
Paſſyng all the marchantis that dwellid in that cete.
Thus when all was ſhewid they dronk and toke their leve,
To ſe Beryn's ſhippis in haſt they gon to meve:
And when that Hanybald was avyſid what charge the ſhippis bere
He gan to ſpeke, in his wyſe aſcaunce, he rought nere

Whethir he bargeynyd or no, and ſeyd thus: Beryn, frend, [an end
Your marchaundiſe is feir and good, now let us make
If yee liſt: I can no more; yee knowith how it is. [mys,
Com, of ſhort let tuk them yn, methinkith I ſey nat
And then yeur meyne and ye, and I, to my houſe ſhall we go,
And of the marchaundiſe I ſaw I wol nat part therfro;
Cheſe of the beſt of that ye find there
Throughout the long houſe, ther ſhall no man yeu dere,
And therwith ſhall yeur ſhippis be fillid all fyve:
I can ſey no betir: yf ye liſt to dryve
This bargeyn to the end counſellith with yeur men;
I may nat long tary, I muſt nedis hen.
Beryn clepid his meyne counſell for to take;
But his firſt mocioune was of the woo and wrake,
And all the tribulacioune, for pleying at ches,
That he had; every dele his ſhame and his dures
Fro poynt to poynt, and how it ſtode, he told how it was,
And then he axid counſaill what beſt was in the caſe,
To chaunge with the burgeyſe or els for to leve?
Eche man ſeyd his aviſe; but al that they did meve
It wer to long a tale for to tell it here:
But fynally, at end, they cordit al in fere
That the chaunge ſhuld ſtond, for as the caſe was fall
They held it clerely for the beſt, and went forth wyth-all

The next wey that they couth to Hanybald's place.
But now shull ye here the most sotill fallace
That evir man wrought till othir, and highest trechery,
Wich Hanybald had wrought hymself to this com-
pany.
Go in, quod Hanybald, and chese, as thy covenaunt is,
In goon these Romeyns ech oon, and fond amys;
For there was nothing that eny man might se
Saff the wall and tyle stonys, and tymbir made of tre;
For Hanybald had do void it of all thing that was there;
Whils he was at the shippis his men away it bere.
When Beryn saw the house ler that ful was ther'tofore
Of riche marchaundise, alas! thought he, I am lore,
I am in this world; and wittith well his hert
Was nat al in likeing; and outward gan he stert
Like half a wodeman, and bete both his lippis,
And gan to hast fast towards his own shippis,
To kepe his good within wyth al that evir he myght,
That it were nat dischargit, as hym thought verrey
But al for naught was his hast, for 300 men, [right.
As fast as they myght, they bare the good then, [tofore
Through ordenaunce of Hannybald, that pryvelich
Had purposid and ycast shuld be out ybore.
Beryn made a swyff pase; ther myght no man hym let;
But Hanybald was ware inough, and with Beryn met:
All for nought: Beryn, thou knowist well and syne
The shippis ben areistid, and the good is myne.
What woldest thow do ther? thow hast ther nowght
I wol hold thy covenaunt and thow myne also. [to do;

For yit saw I nevir man that was of thy manere;
Sometyme thou wolt avaunte, and sometyme arere:
Now thow wolt, and now thow n'olt. Wher shul men
the fynd?
Now sey oon, and sith anothir. So variant of mynd
Saw I nevir tofore this dey man so variabill.
Sith I the fynd in such plyte, our bargen for to stabill,
We woll tofore the steward, ther we both shull have
Nay, forsoth, quod Beryn. Yis treulich the tite, [right.
Quod Hanybald, wher thou wolt or no; and so I the
charge
As provost: know that yf me list my warant is so large,
And thow make any diffence, to bynym thy lyffe.
Take thyn hors; it gaynyth nat for to make stryffe.
So wyth sorowfull hert Beryn toke his hors,
And softly seyd to his men, Of nie, quod he, no fors,
But wend to yeur shippis; I wol com when I may;
Ye seth well everichone I may no bet awey.
Now here by this same Tale both fre and bond
Mow sele in their wittis; and eke ondirstonde
That *Litill vailith wysdom or els governaunce*
Ther Fortune evir werrith, and eke Hap and Chaunce:
Or what availeth bounte, beute, or riches,
Frendship, or sotilte, or els hardines,
Gold, good, or catell, wyt, or hy lynage,
Lond, or lordis service, or els high peerage?
What may all this avayle ther Fortune is a foe?
I wis right litill, or nevir a dele: full oft it fallith so.

So, shortly to pas ovir, they fill to such an end
That Beryn shuld have day ageyn a morowe, and so to
He set hym in ful purpose to his shippis ward: [wend
But yit or he cam ther he fond the passage hard;
For how he was begiled throughout all the towne
Ther and ther a coupill gan to speke and to roune;
And every man his purpose was to have parte [art.
With falsnes, and with sotiltees; they coudnoon othir
Beryn rode forth in his wey, his page ran hym by,
Full sore adred in hert, and cast about his eye
Up and down, even long the strete, and forangir swet,
And er he had riden a stone's cast a blynd man with him met,
And spak no word, but sesid hym fast by the lap,
And cried out and harowe, and nere hym gan to stap.
All for nought, quod this blynd; what! wenyst thow for to skape? [be jape.
Beryn had thought to prik forth, and thought it had
The blynd man cast awey his staff, and set on both his hondis; [londis,
Nay, thow shalt nat void, quod he, for all thy rich
Tyll I of the have reson, lawe, and eke righte,
For trewlich I may wit is the that I have lost my sight.
So for ought that Beryn coud othir speke or prey
He myght in no wyse pas; ful sore he gan to may,
And namelich for the pepill throng hym so about,
And eche man gan hym hond, and seyd, Without doute

Ye muſt nedis ſtond, and reſt, and bide the lawe,
Be ye nevir ſo grete a man. So wold I wondir ſawe,
Quod Beryn, yf yee had cauſe, but I know noon.
No, thow ſhalt know or thow go thow haſt nat al ydoon,
The blynd man ſeyd to Beryn. Tell on then, quod he.
Here is no place to plete, the blynd man ſeyd age,
Alſo we have no juge here of autorite;
But Evandir the ſteward ſhall deme both the and me.
When I my tale have told, and thow haſt made anſwere,
By that tyme men ſhull know how thow canſt the clere.
Now, foveren God! I thank the of this ilk dey;
Then I may preve the, be my lyve, of word and eke of fay
Fals, and eke untrewe of covenaunt thow haſt ymakid.
But litill is thy charge now though that I go nakid
That ſometyme wer partinere, and rekenydſt nevir yit;
But thou ſhalt bere or we depart ther of a litill witt,
For, aftir tomyn ſeyng, Evir atte ende
The trowith woll be previd how ſo men evir trend.
Thus they talkid to eche othir tyl they com into the plaſe,
And wer yentrid in the hall ther the ſteward was.
The blynd man firſt gan to ſpake: Sir Steward, for Godd is ſake
Herith me a litill while, for hor I have ytake
He that hath do me wrong moſt of man of mold;
Be my help, as law woll, for hym that Judas ſold.

Ye know wele that oft tyme I have to yew ypleynid
How I was betrayed, and how I was ypeynid,
And how a man some tyme and I our yen did chaunge;
This is the same persone, though that he make it
straunge:
I toke them hym but for a tyme, and wenyd trewly
Myne to have yhad ageyn; and so both he and I
Were ensurid uttirlich, and was our both will;
But for myne the bettir were wrongfullich and ille
He hath them kept hidirto, wyth much sorowe and
pyne
To me, as ye wele knowith; because I have nat myne
I may nat se with his; wher'for me is ful woo:
And evirmore ye seyd that ye myght nothing do
Without presence of the man that wrought me this
unquert:
Now sith he is tofore you now let hym nat astert;
For many tyme and oft yee behete me
And he myght be take he shuld do me gre.
Sith ye of hym be sesid, howevir so yee tave,
Let hym nevir pas tyl I myn yen have.
Beryn, quod Evandir, herist thow nat thy selve
How sotilly he pletith, and ware by eche halve?
Beryn stode all muet, and no word he spake;
And that was tho his grace; sul sone he had be take
And he had mysseyd onys, or els yseyd nay;
For then he had been negatyff, and undo for ay:
For they were grete Sevilioums, and usid probat law,
Where evirmore affirmatyf shuld preve his own saw:

Wher'for they wer so quercloufe of all myght com in mynd,
Though it wer nevir in dede ydo; fuch matere they [wold fynd
To benym a man his good through fom manir gile;
For the blynd man wift right wele he fhuld have loft his whyle
To make his pleynt on Beryn, and fuyd oppon his good,
For fhippis and eke marchaundife in a balaunce ftode;
Ther'for he made his chalenge his yen for to have,
Or els he fhuld for them fyne yf he wold them have,
And ligg for them in hoftage tyll the fynaunce cam:
This was all the fotilte of the blynd man.
Beryn ftode all muet, and no word he fpak.
Beryn, quod Evander, left thow be ytake
In defaute of anfwere thou myghtift be condempnyd,
Be right wele avyfid, fith thou art examenyd.
Sir, feyd Beryn, it wold litill availe
To anfwere thus alone without good counfaill;
And alfo ferthermore, full litill I fhuld be levid,
Whatevir I anfwerd, thus ftonyd and repuevid;
And eke my wit doith faille; and no wondir is;
Wher'for I wold prey yew, of yewr gentilnes,
To graunt me dey tyll to morowe I might be avyfid
To anfwere forth, wyth othir that on me been furmyd.
Deperdeux! quod the fteward, I graunt welit be fo.
Beryn toke his leve, and hopid to pas and go:
But as fone as Beryn was on his hors rydyng
He met a woman and a child wyth fad chere comyng,

That tokē hym by the eyn, and held hym wondir faſt,
And ſeid, Sir, voidith nat yit, vailith nat to haſte;
Ye mow in no wyſe ſcape; ye muſt nedis abyde;
For though ye liſt to know me nat, yit lien by yeur ſide
I have ful many a tyme, I can nat tell yew lome.
Come tofore the ſteward, ther ſhall ye here yeur dome
Of thing that I ſhall put on yew, and no word for to ly:
To leve me thus aloon it is yeur villany.
Alas the day and tyme that evir I was yeur make!
Much have I endurid this too yere for yeur ſake;
But now it ſhall be know who is in the wronge.
Beryn was all abaſhid, the pepill ſo thik thronge
About him in eche ſide: for ought that he couth peyn
He muſt to the ſteward of fyne fors ageyn.
Now ſhull ye here how ſotillich this woman gan hir tale
In preſence of the ſteward. With colour wan and pale
Petouſly ſhe gan to tell; and ſeid, Sir, to yew
Full oft I have compleynyd in what manere and how
My child is fadir left me, by myſelf aloon,
Wythout help or comforte, as grete as I myght goon
Wyth my ſon here and his, that ſhame it is to tell
The penury that I have yhad, that afors fell
I muſt nedis myne aray, wher me liſt or lothe,
Or els I muſt have beggit for to fynd us both;
For there was nevir woman I leve, as I ges,
For lak of hede of ly velode that lyvid in more diſtres
Then I my ſelf for oft tyme for lak of mete and drink;
And yit I trow no creature was feyner for to ſwinke

My lyff to ſuſtene: but as I mut nede
Above all othir thingis to his child take hede,
That woudir is and mervaile that I am alyve;
For the ſokyng of his right as it were a knyve
It ran into my hert; ſo low I was of mode
That well I woot in certen with percell of my blode
His child I have ynoriſhid; and that is by me ſeen;
For my rede colour is turnid into grene:
And he that cauſe is of all here he ſtondith by me;
To pay for the foſteryng methinkith it is tyme.
And ſith he is my huſbond, and hath on me no rowith,
Let hym make amendis in ſaving of his trowith.
And yf he to any word onys can ſay nay
Lo! here my gage, al redy to preve all that I ſey.
The ſtewarde toke the gage, and ſpak in ſoft wyſe;
Of this petouſe compleynt a mann'ys hert may griſe,
For I know in percell hir tale is nat all leſe,
For many a time and oft this woman that here is
Hath ybe tofore me, and pleynid of hir greffe,
But wythout a party hir cauſe myght nat preffe.
Now thou art here preſent that ſhe plenyth on
Make thy defence now, Beryn, as wele as thow con.
Beryn ſtode all muet, and no word he ſpak.
Beryn, quod the ſteward, doiſt thow ſclepe or wake?
Sey onys oon or othir: is it ſoth or nay
As ſhe hath declarid? tell on ſaunce delay.
Lord God! quod Beryn, what ſhuld it me availe
Among ſo many wiſe, without right good counſaill,

To tell eny tale? full litil as I ges:
Wher'for I wold prey you of your gentilnes
Graunt me day tyl to morowe to anſwer forth with othir.

I graunt wele, quod the ſteward, but for fadir and modir,
Thow getiſt no lenger tyme pleynly I the tell.
Beryn toke his leve; his hert gan to ſwell
For pure verrey anguyſh; and no mervaill was;
And who is that that n'old and he were in ſuch caſe?
For al his triſt and hope in eny worldlich thing [kyng;
Was cleen from hym paſſid, ſave ſorowe and myſfly-
For body, good, and catell, and lyff, he ſet at nought,
So was his hert ywoundit for angir and for thought.
Beryn paſſyd ſoftly, and to his hors gan go;
And when he was without the gatis he lokid to and fro,
And coud noon othir countenaunce; but to his page he ſeyd,
Precioufe God in heven! how falſly am I betrayd!
I trow no man alyve ſtont in wers plight,
And all is for my ſynne, and for my yong delite;
And pryncipally above all thyng for grete unkyndnes
That I did to my modir; for littil hede iwis
I toke of hir, this know I wele, whils ſhe was alyve,
Therfor al this turment is ſent to me ſo ryve:
For ther was nevir woman kynder to hir child
Then ſhe was; and ther ageyns nevir thing ſo wyld
Ne ſo evil thewid as I was my ſelf,
Ther'for ſorowe and happs environ me by eche helve,

That I n'ote whider ryde nethir up ne down,
Ther been so many devillis dwellyng in this town,
And so ful of gile and trechery also,
That well I woot in certeyn they woll me ondo.
Now wold to God in hevyn what is my best rede!
He toke his hors to his page, and thus to hym he sayd,
Lede my hors to shipward, and take it to some man,
And I woll go on foot as pryvely as I can,
And assay yf I may in eny manere wise
Eschape unarrested more in such manner wise.
The child toke his maistir's hors, and laft hym there
Walking forth on foot, making oft his moon; [aloon,
And in his most musing, I can nat sey how lome,
He wosshid nakid as he was bore he had be in Room.
And no mervaill was it as the case stode,
For he drad more to lese his eyen than he did his shippis or his good.
Now yee that listith to dwell and here of aventure,
How petously Dame Fortune, Beryn to inure,
Turnyth hir whele about in the wers side; [ride.
With hap of sorowe and anguyssh she gynyth for to
Beryn passid toward the strond ther his shippis were,
But yee mow ondirstond his hert was ful of fere;
Yet nethirles he sat hym down softly on a stall,
Semy'ryse for sorowe, and lenyd to the wall
For turment that he had, so wery he was and feynt,
And to God above thus he made his pleynt:

Glorious God in heven! that al thing madist of nought,
Why sufferist thow these cursid men to stroy me for nought,
And knowest well myn innocent, that I have no gilt
Of al that they pursu me or on me is pilt?
And in the meen whils that Beryn thus gan pleyn
A cachepoll stode besidis, his name was Machaign,
And herd all the wordis, and knew also tofore
How Beryn was turmented both with las and more:
It was ysprong through the town; so was he full ensensid
How he hym would engyne as he had propensid,
And had araid hym sotillich as man of contemplacioune,
In a mantell wyth the list, with fals dissimulacioune,
And a staff in his honde, as thoughe he febill were,
And drow hym toward Beryn, and seid in this manere:
The high God of heven, that al thing made of nought,
Bles yew, gentil Sir, for many an hevy thought
Me thinkith that ye have, and no wondir is:
But, good Sir, dismay yew nat, but levith yewr hevines,
And yf ye list to tell me somwhat of yeur distres
I hope to God Almighty in party it redres
Through my pore counsaill, and so I have many oon,
For I have pete on yew be God and by Seint Jön:
And eke pryvy hevines doith eche man apeir
Sodenly or he be ware, and fall in dispeir;

And who be in that plage that man is incurabill,
For consequent comyth aftir sekenes abominabill;
And ther'for, Sir, diskeverith yewe, and be nothing
adrad.
Graunt mercy! Sir, quod Beryn, ye seme trew and sad;
But o thing lyith in myn hert, I n'ote to whom to trust,
For tho that dyned me to day ordeyned me to arest.
A Sir! be yew that man? of yew I have yherd.
Gentill Sir, doutith nat, ne be nothing aferd
Of me, for I shall counsell yew as well as I can,
For trewlich in the cete dwellith many a fals man,
And usyn litil els but falshode, wrong, and wyle
And how they might straungers with trechery begile:
But ye shul do right wisely somewhat be my counsail.
Speke with the steward; that may you most availl;
For ther is a comyn byword, yf ye it herd havith,
Wele setith he his peny that the pound savith.
The steward is a covetouse man, that long hath disirid
A knyff I have in keping, wherwith his hert I wirid;
Shall be yew to help, in covenaunte that yee
Shall give me five mark yeur treu frend to be.
The knyff is feir, I tell yew; yit nevir tofore this day
Myght the steward have it for aught he coud prey,
The wich ye shuld gyve hym, the betir for to spede,
And behothe hym xx *l.* to help yew in yeur nede;
And yf he grauntith, trustith wele ye stond in good
plight;
For betir is then lese all the las the more quyt.

And I woll go wyth yew ſtraight to his plaſe,
And knele down and ſpeke firſt to amend yewr caſe,
And ſey yee be my coſin; the betir ſhal ye ſpede;
And when that I have all ytold the knyff to hym yee bede.
Beryn thankid hym hertlich, and on hym gan truſt,
With hond in hond enſurid, and all for the beſt;
Beryn thought noon othir, al that it othir was.
Machaign hym comfortid, talkyng of their caſe,
And paſſid forth ſtylly toward the ſteward blyve
Beryn and Machaign; but Beryn bare the knyff,
And traſt much in his felawe to have ſom help:
But or they departed were they had no cauſe to yelp
Of no manir comfort, as ye ſhull here anoon;
For as ſone as Machaigne tofore the ſteward com
He fill plat to the erth: a grevous pleynt and an huge
He made; and ſeyd, Sir Steward, now be a trew juge
Ageyns this fals treytour that ſtondith me beſyde;
Let take of hym good hede, els he woll nat abide.
Now mercy gode Steward, for yee have herd me yore
For my fadir Melan pleyn to you ful ſore,
That with 7 dromedarys, as I have told yew lome,
With marchandiſe chargit went toward Rome,
And it is 7 yere ago and a litill more
Of hym or of his gooddis that I herd les or more;
And yit I have enquerid as byſely as I couthe,
And met nevir man yit that me coud tell with mowth
Any tyding of hym onto this ſame day;
But now I know too much, alas! I may wel ſey.

When Beryn herd theſe wordis he kiſt down his hede;
Allas! he thought in hert, alas! what is my rede?
And would fayn have voidit, and outward gan toſtapp,
But Machaigne aroſe and ſeſid by the lapp:
Nay, thow ſhalt nat void, he ſeid; my tale is nat ydo;
For be trowith of my body yf thou ſcapidiſt ſo
I ſhuld nevir have mery whils I wer on lyve,
And ſet hond faſt on Beryn's othir ſcleve,
And ſeid, Good Sir Steward, my tale to the end
I prey ye wold here, for wend how men wend
There may no man hele murdir, but it will out at laſt:
The ſame knyff my fadir bere when he of contre paſt
Let ſerch wele this felon, ther ye ſhul hym find;
I know the knyff wele inough, it is nat out of my mynd:
The cotelere dwellith in this toun that made the ſame
And for to preve the trowith he ſhall be here as blyve.
Beryn ſwat for angir, his hert was full of fere;
He toke the knyff to the ſteward or he ſerchid were.
The ſteward onto Beryn, My frend, lo! quod he,
And thow think the well about this is foule plee:
I can know noon othir but thow muſt or thow go
Yeld the body of Melan and his good alſo.
Now be well avyſid ageyn to morowe day, to ſay.
Then ſhalt thou have thy jugement; ther is no more
When Beryn fro the ſteward thus departid was,
And was without the gate, he lokid oppon the plaſe,
And curſid it wondir bitterly in a fervent ire,
And wiſhid many tymes it had been a fire;

For I trowe that man of lyve was nevir wors betrayid
Then I am; and therwithall my hert is cleen dismayid,
For here I have no frendship, but am all counselles,
And they been falsher then Judas, and eke mercyles.
A, Lord God in hevyn! that my hert is woo;
And yit suyrly I mervel nat though that it be so,
For yit in all my lyve sithe I ought undirstode
Had I nevir wyl for to lern good:
Foly I hauntid it evir, ther myght no man me let,
And now he hath ypaid me, he is cleen out of my dett;
For whils I had tyme wysdom I myght have lernyd,
But I drow me to foly and wold nat be governed;
But had al myne own wyll, and of no man aferd,
For I was nevir chastisid; but now myne own yerd
Betith me to sore; the strokis been to hard;
For these devillis of this town takith but litil reward
To sclee my body to have my good. The day is set to morowe;
Now wold to God I wer in grave, for it wer end of sorowe.
I was iwis to much a fole; for hate I had to Rame
I wold forsake myn heritage, ther for sorowe and shame
Is oppon me fall, and right wele deservid,
For I toke none maner hede when my modir stervid,
And disobeyid my fadir, and set hym at naught also;
What wondir is it than though that I have woo?
Fortune and eke Wisdom have werrid with me evir,
And I with them in all my lyf, for Fortune was me levir

Then eny wit or governaunce, for them too I did hate;
And though I wold be at oon now it is to late.
O myghtfull God in heven! wher was evir man
That wrought hymself more foly than I my self did than?
A curſid be the tyme that I out of Rome went!
That was my fadir's right heir of lyvelode and of rent,
And al the riall lordſhip that he hath in the town.
Had I had wit and grace, and hold me low and boun,
It wer my kynd now among my baronage
To hauk and to hunt, and eke to pley and rage
With feir freſhe ladies, and daunce when me liſt;
But now it is to late to ſpeke of Had I wiſt.
But I fare like the man that for to ſwele his flyes
He ſtert into the bern, and aftir ſtre he hies,
And goith about the wallis with a brennyng wiſe,
Tyll it was at laſt that the leem and blaſe
Entrid into the chynys where the wheate was,
And kiſſid ſo the eveſe that brent was all the plaſe;
But firſt in the begynnyng, tyll ſeer ſmote in the raftris,
He toke no manere kepe, and thought of nothing aftir
What perell there myght fall: ne more did I ywis,
That wold forſake myn honour for the unkyndnes
Of Rame, that was my ſtepmodir; for yf I ſhall nat ly
They beth ſoure; wherfor the more wiſely
I ſhuld have wrought, had I had wit, and ſuffrid for a tyme,
And aftir com to purpoſe wel inowghe of myne;

But evil avengit he is deol that for a litil mode
And angir to his neybour sellith awey his good,
And goith hymself a beggyng: aftir in breff tyme
He mut be counted a lewd man in all manere ryme.
So have I wrought and wers, for I dout of my lyve,
How that it shal stond, for plukking of my sleve
The knyff that was me take, as ye have herd tofore;
And yit it grevith mine hert also much more
Of myn own pepill, that no disese aservid. [vyd
I wote wele aftir pleding ryght nought woll be refer-
To sustene their lyvis: I trow ryght nought or lite,
And peraventur lightly stond in wors plight.
Of me it is no fors though I be thus arayed,
But it is dole and pete that they shull be betrayid
That hath nought aservid but for my gilt aloon.
And when that Beryn in thiswise had ymade hismone
A crepill he saw comyng with grete spede and haste
Oppon a stilt ondir his kne bound wondir fast,
And a crouch undir his armys, with hondis al for-
skramyd;
Alas! quod this Beryn, shall I be more examenyd?
And gan to turn aside onto the see stronde,
And the crippill aftir, and wan oppon hym londe.
Tho began Beryn to drede inwardlich sore, [more?
And thought thus in his hert, shall I be comberid
And it wer Godd'is wyll my sorowe for to cese
Methinkith I have inowghe. The cripill began to
preche,

And had yraught nere hond Beryn by the ſleve;
Beryn turnyd as an hare, and gan to ren blyve;
But the cripill knew betir the pathis ſmale and grete
Then Beryn, ſo toforehym he was, and gan hym mete.
Whan Beryn ſaw it vaylid naught to renne ne to lepe,
What for dole and and anguyſh no word myght he ſpeke,
But ſtode ſtill amaſid, and ſtarid faſt about;
The cripill began to ſpeke; Sir, to drede or to dout
Of me wold ye right light, and ye knew myne hert,
So where ye like well or ill fro me ſhall ye nat part
Tyl I have tretid with yew, and go with me alſo,
Of all your foden happis, your myſcheff, and your wo;
For by the tyme that I have knowlech of your caſe,
Your rennyng, and your trotting into an eſy pas,
I ſhall turn or that we twyn, ſo ye altir my ſtole
Woll do, and as I rede yew; for yee wer a fole
When ye cam firſt alonde, ye had met with me,
For I wold have enſenſid yew all the iniquite
Of thes fals marchauntes that dwellen in this town,
And outid all your chaffare without gruch or groun;
For had ye dwellid within your ſhippis, and nat go
them among,
Then had ye been undaungerid, and quyt of all their wrong
On yew that been ſurmyſid through fals ſuggeſtioune.
Beryn gan to ſigh, unneth he might ſoune
Saf o word or tweyn, and Mercy was the firſt,
Preying with all his hert that he myght have his reſt,

And be no more enpledit, but pas fro hym quyte.
Good Sir, quod Beryn, doith me no more dispite,
And suffir me to pas, and have on me routhe,
And I fuyr yew feithfully, have here my trowith,
To morowe when I have pledit, and enything be last
Of ship or marchaundise, afore the ship or baft,
I woll shew yew all ifere, and opyn every cheft,
And put it in yewr grace to do what ye left.
And in the meen while that Beryn gan to clapp
The crypill nyghid hym nere and nere, and hent hym by the lap;
And as sone as Beryn knew that he was in honde
He unlacyd his mantell for drede of some command,
And pryvelich ovir his shuldris let hym down glide,
And had levir lese his mantell then abide.
The cripill all perceyvid, and hent hym by the scleve
Of his nethir furcote. Alas! now mut I strive,
Thought Beryn by hymself, now I am yhent,
There helpith naught save strengith; therwith the scleve to rent
Beryn gan; to scappe he sparid for no cost.
Alas! thought this cripill, this man woll be lost,
And be ondo for evir, but he counsell have;
Iwis thoughe he be lewde my contremen to save:
Yit will I my besines do and peyn that I may,
Sith he is of Room, for that is my contray.
This cripill was an hundrit yere full of age,
With a long thik berd, and a trew visage

He had; and manly and july was he,
And Geffrey was his name yknow in that contre.
Alas! thought this Geffrey, this man hath grete drede
Of me, that by my power wold help hym in his nede;
I wis though he be nyce, untaught and unwise,
I woll nat for his foly leve myne enpryse;
And lept aftir Beryn, and that in right good spede.
Beryn was so sore agast he toke no maner hede
To look onys bakward tyll he to the watir cam,
Then lokid he behynd and saw Sir Clekam
Commaund wondir fast with staff and with his stilt.
Allas! thought Beryn, I now am yspilt,
For I may no ferthir without I wold me droune,
I n'ote wich were the betir, or go ageyn to toune.
Geffrey was so nigh com that Beryn myght nat fle:
Good Sir, quod this Geffrey, why do yee void me?
For by heven quene, that bare Crist in hir barme,
But right as to my self I woll yew no more harme.
Sittith down here by me oppon this see stronde,
And yf ye drede any thing clepe yewr men to londe,
And let them be here with us all our speche tyme,
For I woll nat feyn oon word, as makers doon to ryme,
But counsell yew as prudently as God woll send me grace:
Take comfort to yew, and herk a litill spase.
And when that Beryn had yherd his tale to the end,
And how goodly as Geffrey spak, as he were his frende,

None obstant his drede, yet part of sapience
Stremyd into his hert for his eloquence,
And seyd; God me counsaill for his high mercy!
For I have herd this same dey men as sotilly
Speke, and of yeur semblant, and in such manere,
And byhete me frendship outward by their chere,
But inward it was contrary their intellectioune,
Wherfor the blame is les, though I suspectioune
Have of yewr wordis, lest othir be yewr entent,
For I n'ote whom to trust by God omnipotent;
Yit nethirles yf your will is to com into the ship with me
I woll somwhat do by yeur rede how so it evir be.
Then, quod Geffrey, if it be so that I in yewr powere
Entir into your shippis, and yew help in yewr mystere;
That yee ageyn yewr adversaryes shall have the betir hyde,
And gyve yow such counsell to bate down their pride,
And that yee wynne in every pleynt, al so much or more ybore,
As they purpose to have of yew; yf they be down
And ye have amendis for their iniquite,
And I yew bring to this end, what shall my guerdon be?
In verrey soth, quod Beryn, yf I yew may trust
I woll quyte yew trewly, I make yew beheste.
In feith then, quod Geffray, I woll with yew wende.
What is yewr name, seid Beryn, though my frende?
Gefferey, he seid; but in these marchis I was nat bore,
But I have dwellid in this cete yeeris heretofore

Ful many, and turmented wers then wer yee,
And endurid for my trowith much adverſite,
For I wold in no wiſe ſuffir their falſhedes,
For in all the world ſo corrupt of their dedis
Been noon men alyve, I myght ryght well avow,
For they ſet all their wittis in wrong all that they mowe;
Wher'for full many a tyme the grettiſt of them and I
Have ſtonden in altercatioune for their trechery;
For I had in valew in trew marchaundiſe
A M. l. all have they take in ſuch maner wiſe:
So ferforth to ſave my blode no longer myght I dryve dure;
For drede of wors thus thought I my ſelf to diſfigure,
And have among them 12 yere go right in this plighte,
And evir have had in memory how I myght them quyte;
And ſo I hope now, as ſotill as they be,
With my wit engine them and help yew and me.
My lymes been both hole and ſound, me nedith ſtilt ne crouch.
He caſt aſyde them both, and lepe oppon an huche
And adown ageynes, and walkid to and fro,
Up and down, within the ſhip, and ſhewid his hondis tho,
Stretching forth his fingris in ſight and all about
Without knot or knor, or eny ſign of goute,
And dyght them efft ageyns right diſcetirly,
Som to ride ech othir, and ſom aweward wry.

Geffrey was right myghty, and wele his age did bere,
For natur was more ſubſtantiall when tho dayis wer
Then now in our tyme; for all thing doith waſte
Saff vile and curſid lyving, that growith all to faſte.
What ſhuld I tell more? But Geffrey ſat hym down,
And Beryn hym beſydis; the Romeyns gan to rown,
And mervelled much in Geffrey of his diſgiſenes,
And Beryn had anothir thought, and ſpak of his di-
ſtres.
Now Geffrey, ſeid this Beryn, and I durſt truſt in yewe
That and ye knewe eny man that is alyve anowe
That had of diſcrecioune ſo much influence
To make my party good to morowe in my defence,
And delivir me of ſorowe, as ye behote have,
I wold become his legeman, as God my ſoule ſave.
That wer to much, quod Gefferey; that woll I yew
releſe;
But I deſire of othir thing to have yewr promes,
That and I bryng yewr enmyes into ſuch a traunce
To make ſor yewr wrong is to you right highſenaunce,
And ſo declare for you that with you pas ſuch dome,
That yee oppon your ſeith bryng me at Rome,
Yf God wol ſend yew wedir and grace to repaſe.
Quod Beryn, But I grant yew I wer lewder then an aſſe,
But or I fullich truſt yew holdith me excuſid;
I woll go counſell with my men leſt they it refuſid.
Beryn drew aſyde, and ſpak with his meyne,
And expreſſid every word in what plight and degre

That he ſtode from poynt to poynt, and of his fals
areſtis:
His meyne were aſtonyd, and ſtarid forth as beſtis.
Spekith ſom word, quod Beryn, ſith I am betrayd;
Yee have yherd what Geffrey to me hath ſayd.
Theſe Romeyns ſtode alle ſtill; o word ne cowd they
meve;
And eke it paſſid their wittis. Then Beryn gan releve,
And to Geffrey eft ageyn, and mercy hym beſought.
Help me, Sir, quod Beryn, for his love that us bought
Dying on the rood, and wept full tendirly;
For but ye help, quod Beryn, ther is no remedy,
For comfort nethir counſaill of my men have I noon:
Help me, as God yew help, and els I am undoon.
When Geffrey ſaw this Beryn ſo diſtract and wept,
Pite into eche veyn of his hert crept.
Allas! quod Geffrey, I might nat do a more ſynful
dede,
I leve by my trowith, then fayl yew in this nede;
Faill me God in heven yf that I yew faill!
That I ſhall do my beſines, my peyn, and my travaile,
To help yew be my power; I may no ferther goo.
Yis, yee behete me more, ſeid Beryn, tho,
That yee wold help me at all that I ſhuld ſtond cler.
Beryn gan to wepe and make wers chere.
Stillith yew, quod Geffrey, for how ſo evir ye tire
More than my power ye ought nat deſire;

For thorough the grace of God ye shul be help wele;
I have ther'of no dout; but trewlich I you tele
That ye woll hold me covenaunte and I woll yew also,
To bryng me at Rome when it is all ydo.
In signe of trowith of both sidis of our acordment
Eche of us kys othir of our comyn assent; [wyne;
And all was do. And aftirward Beryn commaundit
They dronk, and then Geffrey seid; Sir Beryne,
Yee mut declare yeur maters to myne intelligence,
That I may the bet perseyve all inconvenience,
Dout, pro, contra, and ambiguite,
Thorough your declaratioune, and enformyd be;
And with the help of our Soveren Lord celestiale
They shall be behynd, and we shull have the ball,
For now the tyme approchith for their cursidnes
To be somwhat rewardit; and cause of yewr distres
Hath my hert ysetlid and fixid them a nye,
As trowith woll and reson, for their trechery:
For many a man tofore this day they have do out of
Distroid and turmentid thorough their fals law; [daw,
For they think litill ellis, and all their wyttis fyve,
Save to have a mann'ys good, and to benym his lyve;
And hath a cursid custom, all ageyns reson,
That what man they enpeche they have noon encheson
Thoughe it be as fals a thing as God hymself is trewe:
And it touche a straunger that is com of newe
Atte first mocioune that he begynneth to meve
Ther stondith up an hundrit hym to repreve.

The lawes of the cete ſtont in probacy;
They uſen noon enqueſtis the wrongis for to try:
And yf thow haddiſt eny wrong, and woldiſt pleyn the,
And were as trewe a cauſe as eny myght be,
Thow ſhuldiſt nat find o man to bere the witnes,
Though every man in the town knew it more or les;
So burrith they togidir, and holdith with eche othir,
That as to counterplede them, though ye wer my bro-
thir,
I wold gyve yew no counſaill, ne their empechement
In no word to deny, for that wer combirment; [anoon,
For then wer they in the affirmatyf, and wold preve
And to yew that wer negatyff the law wold graunt
So for to plede ageyn them it woll litill availl, [anoon:
And yit to every mann'ys wit it ought be grete mer-
vaile,
For their lawes been ſo ſtreyt, and peynous ordinaunce
Is ſtallid for their falſhede; for this is their fyhaunce,
To leſe their lyff for leſing, and I ſope it may knowe;
That lord is riall of the town, and holdith them ſo lowe,
Wherfor they have a cuſtom a ſhrewid for the nonys,
Yf eny of them ſey a thing they cry all at onys,
And ferm it for a ſoth, and it bere any charge; [large;
Thus of the danger of I ſope they kepe them ever at
And therfor wiſdom weer, whoſo might eſchewe,
Nevir to dele with them; for wer it wrong or trewe
It ſhuld litill availl ageyns their falſhedes,
For they been acurſid, and ſo been their dedes;

Wherfor we muſt, with all our wit ſenſibill,
Such anſwers us purvey that they been inſolibill,
To morowe at our aparaunce, and ſhall be reſponſaill,
For of wele and ellis it is thy day fynall.
Now Soveren Lord celeſtiale! with many ſorowful ſighis,
Seyd Beryn to Geffray, ymmemorat of lyes,
Graunt me grace to morowe, ſo that God be plefid
Make ſo myne anſwere, and I ſomwhat y-eſid
By the that art my counſaill, for othir help is noon.
Reherce me then, quod Geffrey, the cauſis of thy foon
Fro poynt to poynt, al in fere, on the is ſurmyſid,
Wherthorough I myght to morowe the betir be aviſid.
Now in ſoth, quod Beryn, thoughe I ſhuld dy
I cannat tell the tenyth part of their trechery,
What for ſorowe and angir that they to me have wrought;
So ſtond I clene deſperat but ye con help ought.
Deperdeux! ſeid Geffrey. and I the woll nat faill,
Sith I have enſurid the to be of thy counſaill;
And ſo much the more that thou art nat wiſe,
And canſt nat me enform of no manet aviſe;
Here ther'fore a while, and tend wel to my lore.
The lord that dwellith in this town, whoſe name I told tofore,
Hope, eſſt reherſid, is ſo inly wiſe
That no man alyve can his pas deviſe,
And is ſo grow in yeris that lx yeer ago
He ſawe nat for age; and yit it ſtondith ſo

That thorough his wit, and wiſdom, and his gover-
naunce, [much or praunce,
Who makith a fray of, or ſtryvith aught, or mel to
Within the ſame cete, that he n'ys take anoon, 1915
And hath his pennaunce forthwith, for pardon uſith
he noon:
For ther n'ys pore ne riche, ne what ſtate he be,
That he ny's undirfote for his iniquité;
And it be previd on hym ther ſhall no gold hym quyte,
Right as the forfete axith moch or lite, 1920
For geyns his commaundment is noon ſo hardy quek,
So hard ſetith he his fote in every mann'ys nek;
For undir ſky and ſterris this day is noon alyve
That coud amend hym in o poynt, al thing to diſtryve.
The 7 Sages of Rome, though al ageyn hym were,
The ſhuld be inſufficient to make his anſwere, 1926
For he can all langagis, Greek, Hebrew, and Latyne,
Caldey, Frenſh, and Lombard, ye know well fyne,
And all maner that men in bokis write;
In poyſe and philoſophie alſo he can endite: 1930
Cevile and canoune, and al maner lawis,
Seneca and Sydrak, and Salamon'ys ſawys,
And the 7 ſciences, and eke law of armys,
Experimentis and pompery, and all maner charmys,
As ye ſhul here aftir er that I depart, 1935
Of his imaginaciouns and of his ſotill art;
For he is of age 300 yere and more,
Wherfor of all ſciences he hath the more lore.

In Denmark he was gotten and ybore alſo,
And in Grece ynoriſhed tyl he coud ſpek and go;
Ther was he put to ſcole, and lernyd wondir faſt,
For ſuch was his grace that all othir he paſt:
But firſt in his begynnyng litil good he had,
But lernyd evir paſſyngly, and was wiſe and ſad:
Of ſtature and of feture ther was noon hym like
Thorough the lond of Grece though men wold hym ſeke.
A kyng ther was in tho yeris that had noon heir male
Saff a doughter, that he lovid as his own ſaal;
Iſope was his ſervaunt, and did hym ſuch pleſaunce
That he made hym his heir, and did hym ſo avaunce
To wed his doughter, and aftir hym to bere crowne,
Thorough prowes and his port ſo low he was and boun;
So as Fortune wold, that was Iſop'is frend,
This worthy king that ſame yere made his carnel end.
That 27 yere is paſſid that Iſope thus hath reigned,
And yit was ther nevir for wrong on hym compleyned
For no jugement that he gaff; yit ſom ageyn hym wylid
A grete part of his pepil, and wold have hym exilid;
But his grete wiſdom, and his manfulnes,
His governaunce, with his bounte and his rightfulnes,
Hath evir yit preſerved hym unto this ilk day,
And woll whyle that he lyvith for aught that men can ſay:
For who hath eny quarel or cauſe for to wonde
Within this ſame cete, quiklich woll he fond,

And it be ſotill matir, to Iſope for to fare,
Fro gynnyng to the end his quarrell to declare; [rowe;
And eve afore, as cuſtom is, peple ſhall be on the mo-
But whoſo ly he ſcapith nat wythout ſhame or ſorowe.
Beryn, thow muſt go thidir, wher thyn enpechement
Shull be ymevid, and therfor pas nat thens
Tyll thou have herd them alle, and report them wele
To me, that am thy counſell, and repeir ſnele.
But ſo rial mancioune as Iſope dwellith in
Ther is noon in the world, ne ſo queynt of gyn,
Wherfore be well aviſid how I enform the
Of the wondir wayis and of the pryvyte
That been wythyn his paleyſe, that thou muſt pas by;
And when thow approchiſt, and art the caſtell nygh,
Blench fro the brode gate, and enter thow nat there,
For ther been men to keep it; yit have thow no fere;
Pas down on the right hond by the caſtell walle
Tyll thow fynd a wyndow, and what ſo the byfall
Entir ther yf thow may, and be nothyng agaſt,
But walk forth in that entre: then ſhalt thow ſee in
A portcolyſe the tofore; pas in boldly [haſte
Tyll thow com to an hall the feyriſt undir ſky:
The wallis been of marbill, yjoynid and ycloſid,
And the pilours of cryſtall, grete and wele propoſid:
The keveryng of bove is of ſelondyn,
And the pament beneth of gold and aſure fyne.
But whoſo paſſith thorough this hall hath nede to ren
Or els he myght be diſware of his own lyve, [blyve,

For ther wythin liith a ſtoon that is ſo hote of kynd
That what thing com for by anoon it woll atend,
As bryght as eny kandell leem, and conſume anoon;
And ſo wold the hall alſo n'er coldnes of a ſtoon
That is yclepid Dionyſe, that ſet is hym ageyn;
So and thow lepe lightly thou ſhalt have no peyn,
For ethir ſtone in kynd proportioned they be,
Of hete and eke of coldnes of oon equalite.
Thow muſt pas thorough the hall, but tary nat I rede,
For thou ſhult fynd a dur up right afore thyn hede:
When thow art entrid ther, and the dore apaſt,
Whatſo thow ſe ligg or ſtond be thow nat agaſt;
And yf thow drede eny thing do no more ſaff blowe,
But yit I rede the beware that it be ſomwhat lowe;
Ther been to libardis loos and untyed,
If that thy blowing of that othir in eny thing be ſpied
Anoon he rakith on the to ſeſe the by thy pate,
For ther n'ys thing in erth that he ſo much doith hate
As breth of mann'ys mowith; wher'fore refreyn the,
And blow but fair and ſoft, and when that nede be.
When thow art paſſid this hall anoon then ſhalt thow
Into the fayreſt garden that is in Chriſtendom, [com
The wich thorough his clergy is made of ſuch deviſe
That a man ſhall ween he is in Paradiſe,
At his firſt comyng in, for melody and ſong,
And othir glorious thingis and delectabill among,
The wich Tholomeus, that ſomtyme Paynym was,
That of aſtronomy knew ev'ry poynt and caſe,

Did it ſo deviſe, thorough his high connyng,
That ther n'ys beſt in erth ne bird that doith ſing
That he n'ys there in figur in gold and ſylvir fyne,
And mow, as they wer quyk, knaw the ſotill engyne.
In mydward of this gardyn ſtant a feir tre
Of al maner levis that undir ſky be,
Yforgit and yfourmit eche in his degre
Of ſylvir and of gold fyne that luſty been to ſee.
This gardeyn is evir grene, and full of May flowris,
Of rede, white, and blew, and othir freſh colouris,
The wich been ſo redolent, and ſentyn ſo about,
That he muſt be right lewde therin ſhuld route.
Theſe monſtrefull thingis I deviſe to the
Becauſe thow ſhuldiſt nat of them abaſhid be.
When that thow comyſt there, ſo thow be ſtrong in thought,
And do be my counſell, drede the right nought,
For ther beth viii tregetours that this gardyn kepith,
Four of them doith waak whils the four ſclepith,
The wich been ſo perfite of nygramance,
And of the art of apparene and of tragetrie,
That they make ſemen as to a mann'ys ſight
Abominabill wormys, that ſore ought be afright
The hertieſt man on erth, but he warnyd were
Of the griſly ſightis that he ſhuld ſee there.
Among all othir there is a lyon white
That and he be a ſtraungir he rampith for to bite,

And hath tofore this tyme 500 men and mo
Devourid and yete, that thereforth have ygo:
Yit shalt thow pas suyrly so thow do as I tell.
The tre I told tofore, that round as eny bell
Berith bow and braunche, traylyng to the ground,
And thow touch oon of them thow art saff and sound;
The tre hath such vertu there shall nothing the dere:
Loke that be the firſt when thow comyst there.
Then shalt thow se an entre by the ferther side;
Thoughe it be streyte tofore, inner large and wyde
It growith more and more, and as a dentour wryith;
Yit woll that wey the bryng there that Isope liith,
Into the feyrist chambir that evir man saw with eye.
When thow art there wythyn govern the wisely,
For there shalt thow here al thyn enpechement
Opynly declarid in Isop'is present.
Report them wele and kepe them in thy mynd,
And aftir thy relacioune we shall so turn and wend,
Thorough help of God above, such help for to make
That they shull be acombrit, and we right well to scape.
Now in soth, quod Beryn, a mann'ys hert may grise
Of such wondir weyis, for al my marchandise
I had levir lese then oppon me take
Such a wey to pas. Then, Sir, for your sake
I woll my self, quod Geffrey: sith I am ensuryd
To help the with my power thow shalt be amyrid
As ferforth as I may; that I woll do my peyn
To bryng yow plesaunt tyding, and retourn ageyn

Yit or the cok crow; and ther'for let me se
Whils I am out how mery ye can be.
Geffrey toke his leve; but who was sory tho
But Beryn and his company? for when he was go
Thei had no maner jdy, but dout and hevynes,
For of his repeyryng thei had no sikernes;
So every man to othir made his compleynt,
And wishid that of felony they had been atteynt,
And so them thought betir to end hevynes
Then every day to lak brede atte first mes;
For when our godd is go what shall fal of us?
Evir to be their thrallis, and peraventure wers,
To lese our lyf aftir yf we displese them ought.
Aftir Geffrey went this was all their thought
Throughout the nyght tyl cokkis gan to sing;
But then encresid anguishe; their hondis gan to wryng,
And cursid wynd and watir that them brought ther,
And wishid many tymes that he had been in bere,
And were apassid and entrid into dispeyr,
In as much as Geffrey did nat repeir:
Eche man seyd to othir it myght nat be ynayid
But Geffray had uttirlich falsly them betrayid
Thoroughout all the long nyght.
. . . . . .
Tho went they to counsell a litill tofore the day,
And were all acordit for to sayl awey;
And so them thought betir, and leve their good ther,
Then abyde theroppon, and have more fere.

They made their takelyng redy, and wend the ſail
For to ſave their lyvis, and ſet nat of their los; [acros,
So ſore they wer adred to be in ſervitute,
And hopid God above wold ſend them ſom refute
By ſom othir coſtis ther wynd them wold bryng:
And therwithall cam Geffrey on his ſtilt lepeing,
And cried wondir faſt by the watir ſyde.
When Beryn herd Geffrey he bid his men abyde,
And to launch out a bote and bryng Geffrey in,
For he may more avayl me now then al my kyn,
And he be trew and truſty, as myn hope is;
But yit ther'of had Beryn no full ſikernes.
Theſe Romeyns ſet in Geffrey with an hevy chere,
For they had levir ſaill forth then put them in weer
Both lyve and goodis: and evill ſuſpicioune
They had of this Geffrey; wherfore they gon roune,
Talkyng to eche othir, This man woll us betray.
Geffrey wiſt well inowghe he was nat to their pay,
And for verry angir he threw into the ſee
Both ſtilt and eke his crouch, that made wer of tre,
And gan them to comfort, and ſeid in this manere:
Benedicite! Beryn, why make ye ſuch chere?
For and yee wex hevy what ſhall yewr men do
But take enſampill of yew? and have no cauſe to;
For yit or it be eve yewr adverſaryes all
I ſhall make them ſpurn and have a ſore fall,
And yee go quyte, and all yewr good, and have of
And they to be right feign for to ſcape ſo [theirs too,

Wythout more daungir, and yewr wyl be;
For of the lawys her ſuch is the equyte
That *Who purſu othir and his pleynt be wrong*
He ſhall make amendis be he nevir ſo ſtrong;
Right as ſhuld the t'odir yf he condempned were,
Right ſo ſhall the pleyntiff right as I yew lere:
And that ſhall preve by them, have ye no doute,
Yit or it be eve right low to yew to loute,
And ſubmit them to yew, and put them in yewr grace
By that tyme I have ymade all my wanlaſe;
And in hope to ſpede well let ſhape us for to dyne.
Geffrey axid watir, and ſith brede and wyne,
And ſeit, It is holſom to breke our faſt betyme,
For the ſteward woll to the court at hour of pryme.
The ſonne gan to ſhyne and ſhope a feir dey;
But for aught that Geffrey coud do or ſey
Theſe Romeyns ſpekyn faſt all the dyner while,
That Geffrey with his ſotill wordis wold them begile.
So when they had ydyned they ryſen up echoone,
And drew them to counſell what was beſt to doon:
Som ſeyd the beſt rede that we do may,
To throw Geffrey ovir the bord, and ſeyll forth our way:
But for drede of Beryn ſom wold nat ſo,
Yit the more party aſſentid wele therto.
Geffrey and Beryn, and worthy Romeyns tweyn,
Stood a part within the ſhip, ſo Geffrey gan to ſeyn,
Beryn, beth aviſid; your men beth in diſtaunce:
Sith ye been her ſoveren put them in governaunce;

For methinkith they boldith contrary opynyoune,
And *Grace faylith comynlich wher is divisioune.*
In the meen whyle that they gan thus to stryve
Hanybald was up, and ycom as blyve
To the brigg of the town ther the shippis rood,
And herd much noyse; but litil while he bood,
For when he saw the saylis stond all acros,
Alas! quod this Hanybald, here growith a smert los
To me that am provost, and have in charge and hest
All these syve shippis undir myn arest;
And ran into the town, and made an hidouse cry,
And chargit all the cetezins to armys for to hy
From o strete tyl anothir, and rerid up al the town,
And made the trompis blowe up and the bellis soun,
And seyd that the Romeyns wer in poynt to pas,
Tyl ther wer a thowsand, rathir mo then les,
Men y-armyd cleen, walkyng to the stronde
When Beryn them aspied; Now, Geffrey, in thy honde
Stont lyf and goodis; doth with us what the list,
For all our hope is on the, comfort, help, and trist;
For we must bide aventure, such as God woll shape,
For now I am in certen we mow in no wise scape.
Have no doubt, quod Geffrey; beth mery; let me aloon;
Getith a peir sisours, sherith my berd anoon,
And aftirwerd lete top my hede hastylich and blyve.
Som went to with sesours, som wyth a knyffe,
So what for sorowe and hast, and for lewd tole,
Ther was no man alyve bet like to a fole

Then Geffrey was by that tyme they had al ydo.
Hanybald clepid out Beryn, to Mote Hall for to go,
And ſtode upon the brigg with an huge route.
Geffrey was the firſt to Hanybald gan to loute,
And lokid out a fore ſhip: God bles yew! Sir, quod he.
Wher art thow now, Beryn? com forth, behold and ſe,
Her is an huge pepill yrayd and ydight;
All theſe been my children that been in armys bryght;
Yiſtirdey I gat them: is nat mervaill
That they been hidir ycom to be of our counſaill,
And to ſtond by us, and help us in our ple?
A! myne own childryn, bleſſid mut ye be!
Quod Geffrey, with an high voiſe, and had a nyce vi-
And gan to daunce for joy in the fore ſtage. [ſage,
Hanybald lok'd on Geffrey as he wer amafid,
And beheld his countenaunce, and how he was yrafid,
But evirmore he thought that he was a fole
Naturell of kynde, and had noon othir tool,
As ſemed by his wordis and his viſage both,
And thought it had been foly to wex with hym wroth,
And gan to bord ageyn, and axid hym in game,
Sith thow art our fadir who is then our dame?
And how and in what plaſe were we begete?
Yiſtirday, quod Geffrey, pleyng in the ſtrete
At a gentil game that clepid is the Quek,
A long peny halter was caſt about my nek,
And yknet faſt with a riding knot,
And caſt ovir a perch, and hale along my throte.

Was that a game, quod Hanybald, for to hang thy selve?
So they seyd about me, a thousand eche by hymselfe.
How scapiddist thow, quod Hanybald, that thou wer
Therto can I answer without any rede; [nat dede?
I bare thre dise in myn own purs,
For I go nevir without, fare I betir or wers;
I kist them forth all thre, and too fill am'ys ase,
But here now what fill after, right a mervelouse case;
Ther cam a mowse lepe forth, and eté the third boon,
That puffid out her skyn as grete as she myght goon;
And in this maner wise of the mowse and me
All ye be ycom my children fair and fre;
And yit or it be eve fall woll such a chaunce
To stond in my power yew all to avaunce,
For and we plede well to day we shall be riche inowghe.
Hanybald of his wordis hertlich loughe,
And so did all that herd hym, as they myght wele,
And had grete joy wyth hym for to tell,
For they knew hym noon othir but a fole of kynd, [end.
And all this was his discrecioune, and that previd the
Thus whils Geffrey japid to make their hertis light
Beryn and his company were rayid and ydight,
And londit them in botis, ferefull how to spede,
For all their thoughtis in balance stode betwene hope and drede:
But yit they did their peyn to make lightsome chere,
As Geffrey them had enfourmed, of port and all manere

Of their governaunce all the long day
Tyll their plee wer endit; ſo went they forth their wey
To the court with Hanybald. Then Beryn gan to ſey,
What nedith this, Sir Hanybald, to make ſuch aray,
Sith we been peſe-marchantis, and uſe no ſpoliacioune?
For ſoth, Sir, quod Hanybald, to me was made rela-
cioune.
Yee wer in poynt to void; and yef yee had do ſo
Yee had loſt yewr lyvis, without wordis mo.
Beryn held hym ſtyll. Geffrey ſpak anoon;
No les wed then lyvis? Whi ſo, good Sir Jon?
That wer ſomwhat to much as it ſemeth me;
But ye be ovirwiſe that dwell in this cete;
For yi have begonne a thing makith you right bold,
And yit or it be eve as folis ſhull yee be hold:
And eke yee devyne for ſhipmanny's craft, [bafft,
And wotith litill what longith to afore the ſhip and
And namelich in the dawnyng when ſhipmen firſt a-
riſe.
My good frend, quod Hanybald, in a ſcornyng wiſe,
Yee muſt onys enfourm me thorough yowr diſcre-
cioune;
But firſt yee muſt anſwer to a queſtioune; [cioune,
Why make men croſ-ſail in myddis of the maſt?
For to talow the ſhip and ſech more blaſt.
Why goon the yemen to bote ankirs to hale?
For to make them redy to walk to the ale.
Why hale they up ſtonys by the crane lyne?
To make the tempeſt ſeſe and the ſonne ſhyne.

Why close they the port with the see bord?
For the maſtir ſhuld awake at firſt word.
Thow art a redy reve, quod Hanybald, in fay.
Yee, Sir, trewly, for ſothe is that yew ſey.
Geffrey evir clappid as doith a watir myll,
And made Hanybald to laugh al his hert fyll.
Beryn, quod this Geffrey, retourn thy men ageyn;
What ſhull they do with the at court? no man on them pleyn.
Plede thy caſe thy ſelve right as thow haſt ywrought;
To bide with the ſhippis my purpoſe is and thought.
Nay, forſoth, quod Hanybald, thow ſhalt abyde on lond,
Wee have no folis but the; and toke hym by the hond,
For thow art wiſe in law to plede all the caſe. [plaſe.
That can I betir, quod Geffrey, then eny man in this
What ſeyſt thow therto, Beryn? ſhall I tell thy tale?
Hanybald likid his wordis wele, and forward gan hym hale.
Beryn made hym angry, and ſighid wondir ſore,
For Geffrey hym had enfourmid of every poynt tofore,
How he hym ſhuld govern all the long day.
Geffrey chaſid hym ageyn; Sey me ye or nay;
Mayſt'owe nat here ſpeke ſome maner word?
Leve thy blab, lewd fole, me likith nat thy bord:
I have anothir thought, quod Beryn, wherof thow cariſt lite. [the wite:
Clepeiſt thow me a Fole, quod Geffrey? al that I may
But firſt when we out of Rome ſaillid both in fere
Tho I was thy felawe and thy partinere,

For tho the marchandiſe was more then half myne,
And ſith that thow com hidir thow takiſt all for thyne.
But yit or it be eve I wol make oon beheſt,
But thow have my help thy part ſhall be leſt.
Thyn help, quod Beryn; lewde fole, thow art more then maſid;
Dres the to the ſhippis ward with thy crown yraſid,
For I myght nevir ſpare the bet: trus and be agoo. [no,
I woll go with the, quod Geffrey, wher thow wolt or
And lern to plede law to wyn both howſe and lond.
So thow ſhalt, quod Hanybald, and led hym by the hond,
And leyd his hond oppon his nek: but and he had [yknow
Whom he had led, in ſikernes he had well levir in ſnowe
Have walkid xl. myle, and rathir then fail more;
For he wiſhid that Geffrey had ybe unbore
Full oft tyme in that day or the ple wer do,
And ſo did all that wrought Beryn ſham and woo.
Now yee that liſt abide and here of ſotilte
Mowe know how that Beryn ſped in his ple,
And in what aray to the court he went,
And how Hanybald led Geffrey, diſware of his entent;
But yet he axid of Geffrey, What is thy name I pray?
Gylhochet, quod Geffrey, men clepid me yiſtirday.
And wher weer thow ybore? I n'ote I make a vow,
Seyd Geffrey to this Hanybald, I axe that of yew,
For I can tell no more but here I ſtond nowe.
Hanybald of his wordis hertlich lowghe,

And held hym for a paſſyng fole to ſerve eny lord.
Thus they romyd janglyng into the court ward,
But or they com ther the ſteward was yſet,
And the grettiſt of the town a company ymet,
And gon to ſtryve faſt who ſhuld have the good
That com was with Beryn ovir the falt flood.
Som ſeyd oon and ſom ſeyde anothir;
Som wold have the ſhippis, the parell, and the rothir;
Som his eyen, ſom his lyf wold have, and no les,
Or els he ſhuld for them ſyne or he did pas;
And in the mene whils they wer in this affray
Beryn and theſe Romeyns wer com, in good aray
As myght be made of woll, and of colour graynyd;
They toke a ſyde bench that for them was ordeynyd.
When all was huſht and ſtill Beryn aroſe anoon,
And ſtode in the myddis of the hall tofore them everichone,
And ſeyd, Sir Steward, in me ſhall be no let;
I am ycom to anſwer as my day is ſet:
Do me ryght and reſon; I axe yew no more.
So ſhall I, quod the ſteward, for ther'to I am ſwore.
He ſhall have right, quod Geffrey, wher thow wolt
For and thow mys onys thy jugement ondo. [or no,
I woll to the Emperour of Rome my coſyn,
For of o cup he and I full oft have dronk the wyne,
And yit we ſhull heraftir as oft as we mete,
For he is long the gladder when I ſend hym to grete.
This Geffrey ſtode upon a fourm, for he wold be ſey
Above all othir the ſhouldris and the cry,

And ſtarid al about with his lewd berd,
And was yhold a very fole of ech man hym herd.
The ſteward, and the officers, and the burgeyſis all,
Laughid at hym hertlich; the criour gan to call
The burgeyſe that had pleyd with Beryn at ches,
And he aroſe quiklich, and gan hym for to dres
Afore the ſteward at barr, as the maner is;
He gan to tell his tale wyth grete redines:
Here me, Sir Steward, this day is me ſet
To have right and reſon; I axe yew no bet,
Of Beryn that here ſtondith, that with me yiſtirday
Made a certen covenaunt, and at ches we did pley,
That whoſo were ymatid of us both too
Shuld do the todir's bidding, and yf he wold nat ſo
He muſt drink all the watir that ſalt wer in the ſe:
Thus I to hym ſurid and he alſo to me.
To preve my tale trew I am nat all aloon:
Up roſe 10 burgeyſis quyklich anoon,
And affermyd eviry word of his tale ſoth,
And made them all redy for to do their othe.
Evander the ſteward, Beryn, now, quod he,
Thow moſt anſwere nede; it woll noon othir be:
Take thy counſell to the: ſpede on; I have doon.
Beryn held hym ſtyll: Geffrey ſpak anoon;
Now be my trowith, quod Geffrey, I mervell much of yew
To bid us go to counſeil, and knowith me wiſe inowghe,
And evir full avifid, in twynkelyng of an eye,
To make a ſhort anſwer but yf my mowith be dry.

Shuld we go to counsell for o word or tweyn?
Be my trowith we n'yll; let se mo that pleyn;
And but he be yanswer'd, and that right anoon,
I geve yew leve to rise and walk out everychoon,
And aspy redily yf ye fynd me there,
In the meen whils I woll abyde here:
Nay, I tell trewly, I am wiser then ye ween,
For ther n'yis noon of you woot redely what I meen.
Every man gan laughe all his hert fill
Of Geffrey and his swordis; but Beryn held hym still,
And was cleen astonyd; but yit ner the lattir
He held it nat al foly that Geffrey did clattir,
But wisely hym governyd, as Geffrey hym taught,
For percell of his wisdom he had tofore smaught.
Sir Steward, quod Beryn, I undirstond wele
The tale of this burgeyse; now let anothir tell,
That I may take counsell and answer all at onys.
I graunt, quod the steward; then axing for the nonys,
Sith thow wolt be rewlid by the fol'is rede,
For he is right a wise man to help the in thy nede.
Up aros the accusours queyntlich anoon;
Hanybald was the first of them everichoon,
And gan to tell his tale with a proud chere.
Yistirday, Soverens, when I was here
Beryn and thes burgeyse gon to plede fast
For pleying at ches; so ferforth at last,
Thorough vertu of myn office, that I had in charge
Beryn's fyve shippis, for to go at large,

And to be in anſwer her this ſame day; [wey
So walkyng to the ſtrondward we bargeynyd by the
That I ſhuld have the marchandiſe that Beryn with hym brought,
Wherof I am ſeſid, as ful ſold and bought,
In covenaunte that I ſhuld his ſhippis fill ageyn
Of my marchandiſe, ſuch as he toſore had ſeyn
In myn own plaſe, howſis to or thre,
Full of marchandiſe as they myght be;
And I am evir redy, whenſoever he woll,
Let hym go or ſende, and charge his ſhippis full
Of ſuch marchandiſe as he findith there,
For in ſuch wordis we acordit were.
Up roſe x burgeyſis, not tho that roſe toſore,
But othir, and made them redy to have ſwore
That every word of Hanybald, from the begynnyng to the end,
Was ſoth and eke trewe, and with their mende
Full preſt they wer to preve; and ſeyd they wer preſent
At covenaunt making by God omnipotent.
It ſhall nat nede, quod Geffrey, whils that I here ſtond,
For I woll preve it my ſelf with my right honde,
For I have been in four batellis heretofore,
And this ſhall be the fift, and therfor I am ſwore.
Beholdith, and ſeith, and turnyd hym about;
The ſteward and the burgeyſe gamyd all about;
The Romeyns held them ſtill, and lawghid but a lite.
Wyth that cam the blynd man his tale to endite,

That God hym grant wynnyng right as he hath
Beryn and his company ſtood all aſtryvyd [aſervid.
Betwene hope and drede, right in high diſtres,
For of wele or of woo they had no ſikernes.
Beryn, quod this blynd, thoughe I may nat ſee
Stond nere yit the barr, my comyng is for the,
That wrongfullich thow witholdiſt my both to eyen,
The wich I toke the for a tyme, and quyklich to me hijen,
And take them me ageyn, as our covenaunt was.
Beryn, I take no reward of othir mennys caſe,
But oonlich of myn oon; that ſtont me moſt an hond.
Now bleſſid be God in heven that brought the to this lond!
For ſith our laſt parting many bitir teris
Have I lete for thy love, that ſom tyme partineris
Of wynnyng and of leſing were yeris fele,
And evir I fond the trewe, tyl at the laſt thow didiſt
Awey wyth my too eyen that I toke to the [ſtele
To ſe the tregetours pley and their ſotilte,
As yiſtirday here in this ſame plaſe
Tofore yew, Sir Steward, reherſid as it was.
Full trew is that byword, *A man to ſerveſabill*
Ledith oft Beyard from his own ſtabill.
Beryn, by the I meen, though thow make it ſtraunge,
For thow knowiſt trewly that I made no chaunge
Of my good eyen for thyn that badder were.
Therwith ſtode up burgeyſe four witnes to bere.

Beryn held hym ſtyll, and Geffrey ſpak anoon;
Now of thy lewd compleynt, and thy maſid moon,
By my trowith, quod Geffrey, I have grete mervaill,
For though thow haddiſt eyen-ſight it ſhuld litill availe;
Thow ſhuldiſt nevir fare the bet, but the wors, in fay,
For al thing may be ſtill now for the in houſe and way,
And yf thow haddiſt thyn eyen thou woldiſt no counſell hele;
I know wele by thy ſiſnamy thy kynd wer to ſtele:
And eke it is thy profite and thyn eſe alſo
To be blynd as thow art; for now wherſo thow go
Thow haſt thy lyvlode whils thow art alyve,
And yf thow myghtiſt ſe thow ſhuldiſt nevir thryve.
Al the houſe throughout ſave Beryn and his feris
Lawghid of Geffrey, that watir on their leris
Ran down from their eyen for his maſid wit.
Wythat cam the woman, hir tung was nat ſclyt,
Wyth 15 burgeyſis, and women alſo fele,
Her quarel for to preve, and Beryn to apele,
With a feir knave child yloke wythin their armys,
And gan to tel her tale of wrongis and of harmys,
And eke of unkyndnes, untrowith, and falſhede,
That Beryn had ywrought to hir, that quyntlich from hir yede
Anoon opponher wedding, when he his wyll had doon,
And brought hir wyth chyld, and lete hir ſit aloon

Wythout help and comfort from that day, and nowith
He proferid me nat to kys onys with his mowith,
As yisterday, Sir Steward, afore yow eche word
Was rcherſid here, my pleynt is of record,
And this dey is me ſet for to have reſon.
Let hym make amendis, or els tell encheſon
Why hym ought nat fynd, as man ought, his wyf.
Theſe fiftene burgeyſis quyklich al ſo blyve,
And as fele wymen as ſtode by hir ther,
Seyd that they were preſent when they weddit were,
And that every word that the woman ſeyde
Was trew, and eke Beryn had hir ſo betray'd.
Benedicite! quod Geffrey, Beryn, haſt thow a wyf?
Now have God my trowith the dayis of my lyf
I ſhall truſt the the les thow toldiſt me nat to fore
As wele of thy wedding and of thy ſone ybore.
Go to, and kys them both, thy wyf and eke thyn heir:
Be thow nat aſhamyd, for they both be feyr. [couthe:
This wedding was right privy, but I ſhall make it
Behold thy ſone; it ſemith crope out of thy mowith,
And eke of thy condicioune both ſoft and ſome.
Now am I glad thyn heir ſhall with us to Rome,
And I ſhall teche hym, as I can, whils that he is young,
Every day by the ſtrete to gadir houndis dung
Tyll it be abill of prentyſe to craft of *Taverner* taury,
And aſtir I ſhall teche hym for to cache a fly,
And to mend mytens when they been to tore,
And aſtir to cloute ſhoun when he is elder more;

Yit for his parentyne to pipe as doith a mowſe
I woll hym teche, and for to pike a ſnayl out of his howſe,
And to berk as doith an hound, and ſey Baw, baw,
And turn round about as a cat doith wyth a ſtraw,
And to blete as doith a ſhepe, and ney as doith an hors,
And to low as doith a cow; and as myn own corps
I woll cheriſh hym every day for his modirs ſake:
And gan to ſtappe ner the child, to have ytake,
As ſemed by his countenaunce, although he thought nat ſo:
But modir was evir ware, and blenchid to and fro,
And leyd hir hond betwene, and lokid ſomwhat wroth,
And Geffrey in pur wrath beſhrewid them all both;
For by my trowith, quod Geffrey, wel mafid is thy pan,
For I woll teche thy ſone the craftis that I can,
That he in tyme to come myght win his lyvlode,
To wex therfor angry thow art verry wood.
Of huſbond, wyff, and ſone, by the Trynyte
I n'ote wich is the wiſeſt of them all thre.
No, ſothly, quod the ſteward; it liith all in thy noll
Both wit and wyſdom, and previth by thy poll:
For all be that Geffrey wordit ſotilly,
The ſteward and the burgeyſis held it for foly
All that evir he ſeyd, and toke it for good game,
And had full litill knowlech he was Geffrey the lame.
Beryn and his company ſtode ſtill as ſtone
Betwene hope and drede, diſware how it ſhuld goon,

Saff Beryn trist in party that Geffrey wold hym help,
But yit into that hour he had no cause to yelpe [pete:
Wherfor they made much sorowe, that dole was and
Geffrey herd hym sigh sore: What devil is yew? quod he:
What nede yew be sory whils I stond here?
Have I nat enfourmid yew how and in what manere
That I yew wold help, and bryng them in the snare?
Yf ye coud plede as well as I full litill wold ye care.
Pluk up thy hert, quod Geffrey, Beryn, I speke to the.
Leve thy blab lewd, quod Beryn to hym age; 2541
It doith no thing availl that sorowe com on thy hede;
It is nat worth a fly al that thow hast seyde.
Have we nat els now for to think oppon
Saff here to jangill? Machyn rose anoon,
And went to the barr, and gan to tell his tale; 2545
He was as fals as Judas, that set Criste at sale.
Sir Steward, quod this Machyn, and the burgeys is all,
Know with wele how Melan with purpill and with pall,
And othir marchandise, seven yere ago 2550
Went toward Rome, and how that I also
Have enquered sith, as reson woll and kynde,
Sith he was my fadir, to know of his ende;
For yit sith his departing tyl it was yistirday
Met I nevir creature that me coud wish or say 2555
Reedynes of my fadir, dede othir alyve;
But, blessid be God in heven! in this chevis sely ye
The knyff I gaff my fadir was yistirday yfound;
Sith I hym apele let hym be fast ybound.

The knyf I know wel inowe; alſo the man ſtont here,
And dwellith in this town, and is a cotelere,
That made the ſame knyf wyth his too hondis,
That wele I woot there is noon like to ſech al Criſten
For 3 precioufe ſtonys been wythin the haft [londis;
Perfectlich ycouchit, and ſotillich by craft
Endendit in the haft, and that right corioufly,
A ſaphir, and a ſalidone, and a rich ruby.
The cotelere cam lepeing forth with a bold chere,
And ſeyd to the ſteward that Machyn told now here
Every word is trew, ſo beth the ſtonys ſet;
I made the knyf my ſelf, who myght know it bet?
And toke the knyff to Machyn, and he me pay'd wele;
So is this felon gilty; there is no more to tell.
Up aroſe burgeyſis by 2 by 3 by 4,
And ſey'd they wer preſent the ſame tyme and hour
When Machyn wept ſore, and brought his fadir's gownd,
And gaf hym the ſame knyff oppon the ſee ſtrond.
Beth ther eny mo pleyntifs of record?
Quod Geffrey to the ſteward: and he ageynward;
How ſemeth the, Gylhochet, beth ther nat inowghe?
Make thyn anſwer, Beryn, caſe that thow mowe,
For oon or othir thow muſt ſey, although it nat availle,
And but thow leſe or thow go methinkith grete mervaill.
Beryn goith to counſell and his company,
And Geffrey bode behinde to her more and ſe,

And to ſhew the burgeyſe ſomewhat of his hert;
And ſeyd, But I make the pleyntifs for to ſmert,
And alle that them meyntenith, for aught that is yſeyd,
I woll grant yew to kut the eris fro my hede.
My maſter is at counſell, but counſell hath he noon,
For but I hym help he is cleen undoon; [alſo
But I woll help hym al that I can, and meyntene hym
By my power and connyng, ſo I am bound ther'to;
For I durſt wage battell wyth yew, though yee be ſtrong,
That my maiſter is in the trowith and ye be in the [wrong;
For and we have lawe I ne hold yew but diſtroied
In yewr own falſhede, ſo be yee now aſpied;
Wherfor yit or eve I ſhal abate yewr pride, [hide.
That ſom of yew ſhall be right feyn to ſlynk away and
The burgeyſes gon to lawgh, and ſcornyd hym ther'to.
Gylhochet, quod Evander, and thow cowdiſt ſo
Bryng it thus about it were a redy wey.
He is a good fool, quod Hanybald, in fay,
To put hymſelf aloon in ſtrengith and eke in wit
Ageyns all the burgeyſis that on this bench ſit.
What clatir is this, quod Machyn, al day with a fole?
Tyme is now to worch with ſom othir tole,
For I am certeyn of their anſwer that they wol fail,
And lyf for lyf of my fadir what may that avail?
Wher'for beth avifid, for I am in no doute
The goodis been ſufficient to part al aboute,
So may every party pleyntif have his part.
That is reſon, quod the blind; a trew man thow art;

And eke it were untrowith and eke grete syn
But echę of us that pleynith myght somwhat wyn.
Hanybald bote his lippis, and herd them both wele;
Towching the marchandiſe o tale I ſhall yew tell,
And eke make a vow, and hold my behest,
That of the marchandiſe yewr part ſhall be left;
For I have made a bargeyn that may nat be undo;
I woll hold his covenaunt and he ſhal myn alſo.
Up roos quicklich the burgeyſe Syrophanes;
Hanybald, quod he, the law goith by no lanys,
But hold ferth the ſtreyt wey, even as doith a lyne;
For yiſterday when Beryn with me did dyne
I was the firſt perſon that put hym in areſt;
And for he wold go large thow haddiſt in chargeand
To ſeſe both ſhip and goodis til I were anſwerid;
Then muſt I firſt be ſervid, this knowith al men
ylerid.
The woman ſtode beſidis, and cried wondir faſt,
Ful ſoth is that hyword, *To pot who comyth laſt*
He worſt is ſervid: and ſo it farith by me:
Yit nethirles, Sir Steward, I truſt to yewr lentè,
That knowith beſt my cauſe and my trew entent;
I axe yew no more but rightful jugèment:
Let me have part with othir ſith he my huſbond is:
Good Sir, beth aviſid; I axe yew nat amys.
Thus they gon to ſtryve, and wer of high mode
For to depart emong them othir mennys good,
Wher they tofore had nevir properte,
Ne nevir ſhuld thereaftir by doom of equyte;

But they had othir cauſe then they had tho.
Beryn was at counſell, his hert was full woo,
And his meyny ſory, diſtrakt, and al amayide,
For tho they levid noon othir but Geffrey had betrayide;
Becauſe he was ſo long they coud no maner rede,
But everich by hymſelf wiſhed he had be dede.
O myghtful God! they ſeyd, I trow tofore this day
Was nevir gretter treſon, fere, ne affray,
Ywrought onto mankind then now is to us here,
And namelich by this Geffrey with his ſotil chere;
So feithful he made it he wold us help echone,
And now we be ymyryd he letith us ſit aloon.
Of Geffrey, quod Beryn, be as it be may;
We mut anſwer nede, ther is noon othir way;
And ther'for let me know your wit and your counſaile.
They wept, and wrong their hondis, and gan to waille
The tyme that they wer bore, and ſhortly of the lyve
They wiſhid that they wer. With that came Geffrey
Paſſing them towards, and began to ſmyle. [blive,
Beryn axid Geffrey wher he had be al the while?
Have mercy oppon us, and help us as thow hight.
I wol help yow right wele through grace of Godd'is might;
And I can tell yow tiding of their governaunce.
They ſtond in altercatioune and ſtryf in poynt to praunce
To depart your goodis, and levith verrily
That it wer impoſſibill yew to remedy;

But their high pride and their presumpcioune
Shal be yit or eve their confusioune;
And to make amendis ech man for his pleynt,
Let se ther'for your good avise how they might be ateynt.
The Romeyns stode still, as who had shor their hede.
In feith, quod Beryn, we can no maner rede,
But in God and yew we submit us all,
Body, lyf, and goodis, to stond or to fall,
And nevir for to travers o word that thow seyst;
Help us, good Geffrey, as wele as thou mayst.
Deperdeux! quod Geffrey, and I woll do me peyn
To help yow as my connyng woll strech and ateyn.
The Romeyns went to barr, and Geffrey altofore
With a nice countenaunce, barefote, and to tore,
Pleying with a yerd he bare in his honde,
And was evir wistlyng at every pase comaunde.
The steward and the burgeysis had game inowghe
Of Geffrey'is nice comyng, and hertlich lowghe;
And eche man seyd, Gylhochet, com nere;
Thow art right welcome, for thow makist us chere.
The same welcom, quod Geffrey, that yee woll us
Fall oppon yewr hedis, I pray to God, and wers.
They held hym for a verry sole, but he held them wel more;
And so he made them in breff tyme, all though they wer nat shore.

Styntith now, quod Geffrey, and let make pese;
Of myrthis and of japis tyme is now to cese,
And speke of othir mater that we have to doon,
For and we hew amys eny maner stone
We know wele in certeyn what pardon we shul have;
The more is our nede us to defend and save.
My master hath be at counsell, and ful avisid is
That I shall have the wordis, speke I wele or mys;
Wherfor, Sir Steward, and ye burgeysis all,
Sittith upright, and writith nat, for aventur is that may
For and ye deme untrewly, or do us eny wrong, [fall;
Ye shull be refourmyd, be ye nevir so strong,
Of every poynt and injury, and that in grete haste,
For he is nat unknowe to us that may yow chaste:
Hold forth the right wey, and by no side lanys.
And as towching the first pleynt if Syrophanes,
That pleyd with my master yistirday at ches,
And made a certeyn covenaunte, who that had the
In the last game, al thoughe I wer nat there, [wers
Shuld do the todir's bidding, whatsoovir it wer,
Or drynk all the watir that salt wer in the see;
Thus I trowe, Sir Steward, ye woll record the ple,
And yf I have ymissid in lettir or in word
The lawe, wol I be rewlid aftir yowr record;
For we be ful avisid in this wise to answere.
Evander the steward, and al men that wer there,
Had mervil much of Geffrey, that spak so redely,
Whose wordis tofore semyd al foly,

And wer aſtonyed cleen, and gan forto drede;
And ev'ry man tyl othir lenyd with his hede,
And ſeyd he reported the tale right formally;
He was no ſole in certen, but wiſe, ware, and ſcly,
For he hath but yjapid us and ſcornyd heretofore,
And we have hold hym a ſole, but we be wel more.
Thus they ſtodied on Geffrey, and laughid tho right naught.
When Geffrey had aſpied they wer in ſuch thought,
And their hertis trobelid, penſyf, and anoyed,
Hym lyſt to dryve in bet the nayl, till they were fully cloyid.
Soveren Sirs, he ſeyd, ſith that it ſo is
That in reporting of our ple ye fynd nothing amys,
As provith wele yowr ſcilence, eke ye withſeyth nat
O word of our tale, but clene without ſpot,
Then to our anſwer I prey yow take hede,
For we wol ſey al the trowith right as it is in dede;
For this is ſoth and certen, it may nat be withſeyd,
That Beryn that here ſtondith was thus ovirpleid
In the laſt game, when wagir was opon;
But that was his ſufferaunce, as ye ſhull here anoon,
For in all this cete ther n'ys no maner man
Can pley betir at ches then my maſtir can;
Ne bet then I, though I it ſey, can nat half ſo much;
Now how he loſt it by his wyll the cauſe I woll teche;
For ye wend and ween that ye had hym engyned,
But ye ſhul fele in every veyn that ye be undirmined,

And ybrought at ground, and eke ovirmusid.
And agenst the first that Beryn is arusid
Herith now ententyslich. When we wer on the see
Such a tempest on us fill thar noon myght othir se
Of thundir, wynd, and lightenyng, and stormys ther
Fiftene dayis during the tempest was so strong [among.
That eche man till othir began hym for to shryve,
And made their avowis, yf they myght have the lyve,
Som to se the sepulkir, and som to othir place,
To sech holy seyntis for help and for grace;
Som to fast and do pennaunce, and som do almysdede;
Tyl at last, as God wold, a voise to us seyd,
In our most turment, and desperat of mynd,
That yf we wold be savid my maister must hym bynd
Be feith and eke be vow, when he cam to lond,
To drink al the salt watir within the see strond,
Without drinking eny sope of the fresh watir; [nere
And taught hym al the sotilte how and in what ma-
That he shuld wirch by engyne and by a sotill charm,
To drink all the salt watir and have hymself no harm,
But stop the fresh rivers by every cost side,
That they entir nat in the se thorough the world wyde.
The voise we herd but naught we saw; so wer our witts ravid,
For this was end synally, yf we lust be savid.
Wher'for my master Beryn, when he cam to this port,
To his avow and promys he made his first resort,

Or that he wold bergeyn eny marchandiſe,
And right doith theſe marchandis in the ſame wiſe
That maken their avowis in ſaving of their lyvis,
They completyn their pilgremagis or they ſe their wyvis.
So mowe ye ondirſtond that my maſter Beryn
Of fre will was ymatid, as he that was a pilgrym,
And myght nat perfourm by many thowſand part
His avow and his heſt wythout right ſotil art,
Without help and ſtrengith of many mennys myght.
Sir Steward, and Sir Burgeyſe, if we ſhul have right
Sirophanes muſt do coſt and aventure
To ſtop al the freſh ryvers into the ſee that entir,
For Beryn is redy in al thing hym to quyte,
So he be in defaute muſt pay for the wite.
Sith ye been wiſe al what nede is much clatir?
Ther was no covehaunte them betwene to drink freſh watir.
When Sirophanes had yherd al Geffrey's tale
He ſtode al abaſhid, with colour wan and pale,
And lokid oppon the ſteward with a rewful chere,
And on othir frendſhip and neyghbours he had there,
And preyd them of counſell the anſwere to reply.
Theſe Romeyns, quod the ſteward, been wondir ſely,
And eke right ymmagytyf, and of ſotil art,
That I am in grete dowte how yee ſhul depart
Without harm in oon ſide: our lawis, well thow woſt,
Is to pay damagis, and eke alſo the coſt,

Of every party plentyf that fallith in his pleynt:
Let hym go quyt I counsell, yf it may so be queynt.
I mervell, quod Sirophanes, of their sotilte,
But sith that it so stondith, and may noon othir be,
I do woll be counsell, and grauntid Beryn quyte.
But Geffrey thought anothir, and without respite,
Sirs, he seyd, me wetith wele that ye wol do us right,
And so ye must nedis, and so ye have us highte;
And therfore, Sir Steward, ye occupy our plase,
And ye know wele what law wol in this case;
My mastir is redy to perfourm his avow.
But natheless, quod the steward, I cannat wete how.
To stop all the fresh watir were possibilite.
Yis, in soth, quod Geffrey, who had of gold plente
As man coud wish and it myght well be do:
But that is nat our defaute, he hath no tresour to.
Let hym go to in haste, or find us suerte
To make amendis to Beryn for his iniquite,
Wrong, and harm, and trespas, and undewe wexaci-
Lost of sale, and marchandise, chese, and tribulaci-
oune,
That we have sustenyd thorough his iniquite.
What vaylith it to tary us? for though ye sotil pry
We shull have reson whet ye wol or no,
So woll we that ye knowe what that we woll do;
In certen full avisid to hope for to pase,
And declare every poynt, the more and eke the lase,

That of yeur opyn errours hath pleyn correctioune,
And ageyns his jugement is noon protectioune:
He is yewr lord riall, and soveren jugge and lele,
That and ye work in eny poynt to hym liith our apele.
So when the steward had yherd, and the burgeysis alle,
How Geffrey had ysteryd, that went so nighe the gall,
What for shame, and drede of more harm, and represse,
They made Sirophanes, weer hym looth or leffe,
To take Beryn gage, and plegg find also,
To byde the ward and jugement of that he had mysdo.
Now ferthermore, quod Geffrey, sith that it so is
That of the first pleyntyf we have sikernes,
Now to the Marchant we must nedis answere,
That bergeyned with Beryn al that his shippis bere,
In covenaunte that he shuld his shippis fill ageyn
Of othir marchandise that he tofore had seyn
In Hanybald'is plase, howsis to or thre,
Full of marchandise as they might be;
Let us pas thidir, yf eny thing be there
At our lust and liking, as they accordit were.
I graunt wele, quod Hanybald, thow axist but righte;
Up arose these burgeysis, Thow axist but right.
The steward and his comperis entrid first the howse,
And saw nothing within, straw, ne leff, ne mowse,
Save tymbir, and the tyle stonys, and the wallis white.
I trow, quod the steward, the wynnyng woll be but lite

That Beryn woll now get in Hanybald's pleynte,
For I can se noon othir but they woll be ateynt,
And clepid them in echone, and went out hymselve.
As sone as they were entrid they saw no maner selve,
For soris of their hert, but, as tofore is seyd,
The howse was cleen yswept; then Geffrey seir they
To help yf he coud. Let me alone, quod he, [preyde
Yit shul they have the wers as sotil as they be.
Evander the steward in the mene while
Spak to the burgeyse, and began to smyle;
Though Sirophanes be yhold thes Romeyns for to curs,
Yit I trow that Hanybald woll put hym to the wers,
For I am suyr and certeyn within they shul nat fynd.
What sey ye be my pleynt, Sirs, quod the blynd?
For I make a vow I woll nevir cese
Tyl Syrophanes have of Beryn a pleyn relese,
And to make hym quyte of his submissioune,
Els wol I have no pete of his contritioune,
But folow hym al so fersly as I can or may
Tyll I have his eyen both to away.
Now in feith quod Machyn, and I wol have his lyffe,
For though he be shape yew all with me woll he nat stryffe,
But be right feyn in hert all his good forfake
For to scape wyth his lyf, and to me it take.
Beryn and his felesship wer within the house,
And speken of their answer, and made but litill rouse,

But evir preyd Geffrey to help yf he coud ought.
I woll nat faill, quod Geffrey, and was tofore be-
Of too botirfliis, as white as eny snowe; [thought
He lete them flee within the house, that aftir on the
wowe
They clevid wonder fast, as their kynd woll,
Aftir they had flew to rest anothir pull.
When Geffrey saw the botirfliis cleving on the wall
The steward and the burgeyse in he gan call;
Lo! Sirs, he sayd, whoso evir repent,
We have chose marchandise most to our talent
That we fynd herein. Behold, Sir Hanybal,
The yondir botirfliis that clevith on the wall;
Of such ye must fill our shippis al fyve.
Pluk up thy hert Beryn, for thow most nedis thryve;
For when we out of Rome in marchantfare went,
To purchase botirfliis was our most entent;
Yit woll I tell the cause especial and why:
There is a leche in Room that hath ymade a cry
To make an oyntement to cure all tho ben blynde,
And al maner infirmytees that growith in mankynde.
The day is short; the work is long: Sir Hanyball, ye
must hy.
When Hanybald herd this tale he seyd pryvely
In counsell to the steward; In soth I have the wers,
For I am fayr by this pleynt that shall I litil purs.
So me semeth, quod the steward, for in the world
So many botirfliis wold nat be founde [rounde

I trow o ship to charge, wher'for me thinkith best
Let hym have his good ageyn, and be in pese and rest.
And yit is an aventure and thow scape so
Thy covenaunt to relese without more ado.
The burgeysis everichone, that were of that cete,
Were anoyid sore when they herd of this plee;
Geffrey with his wisdom held them hard and streyte,
That they were acombrit in their own distreyte.
When Hanybald with his frendis had spoke of this matere
They drow them towards Beryn, and seid in this ma-
Oonly for botirsliis ye com fro your contrey, [nere:
And we you tell in sikirnes and opon our fey,
That so many botirflyes we shul nevir gete,
Wherefore we be avisid othirwise to trete; [kid,
That Hanybald shall relese his covenaunt that is ma-
And delyver the good ageyn that from you was ran-
And wexe you no more, but let you go in pese. [sakid,
Nay forsoth, quod Geffrey, us nedith no relese;
Ye shull hold our covenaunt and we shull yours also,
For we shull have reson wher ye woll or no
Whils hope is alyve; I am nothing aferd,
For I can wipe all this plee cleen from your berd,
And ye blench onys out of the high wey. [ley.
Thei proferid hym plegg and gage without more de-
Now ferthirmore, quod Geffrey, us ought to procede,
For to the blynd mann'ys poynt we must answer nede;
That, for to tell trowith, he lyvith all to long
For his own sawte and his own wrong

On Beryn he hath furmyſid, as previth by his plee,
And that ye ſhull opynlich know wele and ſee;
For as I undirſtode hym he ſeyd that fele yeris
Beryn, that here ſtondith, and he were pertyneris
Of wynnyng and of leſyng, as men it uſe and doith,
And that they chaungit eyen, and yit this is ſothe:
But the cauſe of chaunging yit is to yow onknow,
Wher'fore I woll declare it both to high and lowe.
In that ſame tyme that this burgeyſe blynd,
And my maſter Beryn, as faſt as feith might bynde,
Were marchaundis in comyn of al that they myght
Saff of lyf and lym, and of dedely ſyn,
Ther fill in tho marchis of al thing ſuch a derth
That joy, comfort, and ſolas, and al maner myrth,
Was exilid cleen, ſaff oonly moleſtatioune,
That abood continuel—i—deſperatioune:
So when that the pepil wer in moſt myſcheffe
God that is above, that al thing doith releve,
Sent them ſuch plente of mony, fruyte, and corn,
Wich turnid al to joy their mournyng al to forn;
Then gaf they them to mirth, revel, pley, and ſong,
And thankid God above evir more among
Of their relevacioune from woo into gladnes,
For *Aftir ſour when ſwete is com it is a pleſant mes.*
So in the meen while of this proſperite
Ther cam ſuch a pleyer into the ſame contre
That nevir thertofore was ſeyn ſuch anothir,
That wele was the creture that born was of his modir

That myght se the myrthis of thir jogelours,
For of the world wide tho dayis he bare the floure,
For there n'as man ne woman in that regioune
That set of hymself the more of a botom
Yf he had not sey his myrthis and his game.
So oppon a tyme this pleyer did proclame
That al manere of pepill his pleyis wold se
Shuld com oppon a certen dey to the grete cete:
Then among othir my maister here, Beryn,
And this same blynd, that pledith now with hym,
Made a certen covenaunt that they wold se
The mervellis of this pleyer and his sotilte:
So what for hete of somir, age, and febilnes,
And eke also the long way, this blynd for werynes
Fill flat adown to the erth; mo fote he myght he go;
Wher'for my master Beryn in hert was full woo,
And seyd, My frende, how now? now ye no ferther
No, he seyd, by hym that first made mas; [pas?
And yit I had levir, as God my soule save,
Se thes wondir pleyis then all the good I have.
I cannat els, quod Beryn, but yf it may nat be
But that ye and I mut retourn age
Aftir ye be refreshid of your werynes,
For to leve yew in this plite it wer no gentilnes.
Then seyd this blynd, I am avisid bet;
Beryn, ye shull wend thidir without eny let,
And have myn eyen with yew that they the pley mow
And I woll have yeurs tyll ye come age. [se,

Thus was their covenaunt made, as I to yow report,
For ese of this blynd, and most for his comfurt.
But wouth wele the whole science of all surgery
Was unyd or the chaunge was made of both eye
With many sotill enchantours and elle nygramanceers,
That sent were for the nonys maistris and scoleris.
So when all was complete my maistir went his wey
With this mann'ys eyen and saw all the pley,
And hastily retourned into that plase age,
And fond this blynd seching on hondis and on knè,
Grasping all aboute to fynd that he had lore,
Beryn his both eyen that he had tofore.
But as sone as Beryn had pleyn knowleche
That his eyen were ylost, unneth he myght areche
O word, for pure anguysh that he toke sodenly,
And from that day till now ne myght he nevir spy.
This man in no plase ther law was ymevid;
But now in his presence the soth is full yprevid,
That he shall make amendis or he liens pas
Right as the lawe wol deme, ethir more or las:
For my maistr'is eyen were betir and more clere
Then these that he hath now to se both fer and nere;
So wold he have his own, that proper were of kynd,
For he is evir redy to take to the blynde
The eyen that he had of hym, as covenaunt was,
So he woll do the same. Now, Soverens, in this cas
Ye mut take hede for to deme right,
For it wer no reson my maistir shuld lese his sight

For his trew hert and his gentilnes.
Beryn, quod the blind, tho I woll the releſe
My quarell and my cauſe, and fall fro my pleynt.
Thow mut nede, quod Geffrey, for thow art ateynt,
So mut thow profir gage, and borowis fynd alſo,
For to make amendis, as othir have ydo.
Sir Steward, do us law, ſith we deſire but right:
As we been peſe marchandis us longith nat to fight,
But pleyn us to the law, yf ſo we be agrevid.
Anoon opon that Geffrey theſe wordis had ymevid
The blynd man fond borowis for all his maletalent,
And were yentrid in the court to byde the jugement;
For thoughe that he blynde were yit had he good plente,
And more wold have wonne through his iniquite.
Now herith, Sirs, quod Geffrey: thre pleyntifs been aſſurid;
And as anenſt the ferth this woman hath arerid,
That pleynith here on Beryn, and ſeyth ſhe is his wyfe,
And that ſhe hath many a day led a peynous lyfe,
And much ſorow endurid his child to ſuſtene,
And al is ſoth and trew. Now rightfullich to deme
Whether of them both ſhall othir obey,
And folowe will and luſtis, Sir Steward, ye mut ſey.
And therewith Geffrey lokid aſide on this woman
How ſhe chaungit colours, pale and eke wan.
All for nought, quod Geffrey, for ye mut with us go,
And endure with your huſbond both wele and woo;

And wold have take her by the hond, but she awey
did breyde,
And with a grete sighing these wordis she seyd;
That ageyns Beryn she wold plede no more,
But gagid with too borowis, as othir had do tofore.
The steward sat as still as who had shor his hede,
And specially the pleyntifs were in much drede:
Geffrey set his wordis in such maner wise
That wele they wist they myght nat scape in no wise
Without loss of goodis for damage and for cost,
For such wer their lawis wher pleyntis were yloft.
Geffrey had full perseyte of their encombirment,
And eke he was in certen that the jugement
Shuld pas with his maistir; wherfor he anoon,
Soveren Sirs, he seyd, yit must we ferthir goon,
And answere to this Machyn, that seith the knife is
That found was on Beryn; ther'of he seith nat onys:
And for more prefe he seith in this manere
That here stondith present the same cotelere
That the knyfe made, and the pretious stonys thre
Within the haft been couchid, that in Crystyanite,
Thoughe men wold of purpose make serch and seche,
Men shuld nat fynd in al thing a knyfe that were it
liche;
And more opyn prefe than mann'ys own knowleche
Men of law ne clerkis con nat tell ne teche.
Now sith we be in this manere thus ferforth ago,
Then were spedfull for to know how Beryn cam first

Have poſſeſſioune of the knyfe that Machyn ſeith is his:
To yew unknowe I ſhall enfourm the trowith as it is.
Now 7 yere and paſſid, opon a Tuyſday
In the Paſſioun-week, when men leven pley,
And uſe more devocioune, faſtyng, and preyer,
Then in othir tyme or ſefon of the yere,
This Beryn's fadir erlich wold ariſe,
And barefote go to chirch to Godd's ſerviſe,
And lay hymſelf aloon from his own wyfe,
In reverence of the tyme, and mending of his lyfe:
So on the ſame Tuyſday that I tofore nempt [went,
This Beryn roſe and rayd hym, and to the chirch
And mervelid in his hert his fadir was nat there,
And homward went ageyn with drede and eke fere.
Into his fadir's chambir ſodenlich he rakid,
And fond hym ligg ſtan dede oppon the ſtraw al na-
And the clothis halid from the bed awey. [kid,
Out, alas! quod Beryn, that evir I ſaw this dey!
The meyne herd the noiſe, how Beryn cried alas,
And cam into the chambir al that therein was;
But the dole, and the ſorowe, and anguyſh, that was
It vaylith nat at this tyme to declare it here; [there
But Beryn had moſt of all, have ye no doute:
And anoon they ſerchid the body al abonte,
And fond this ſame knyfe, the poynt right at his hert
Of Beryn's fadir, whoſe teres gan outſtert
When he drowgh out the knyfe of his fadir's wound;
Then ſtandede I ſaw hym fall down to the ground

In sight of the most part that beth with hym nowe here,
And they affermyd it for soth, as Geffrey did them lere:
And yit had I nevir suspecioun from that day tyll noweth
Who ded that cursed dede, tyll Machyn with his moweth
Afore yew hath knowlechid that the knyse is his;
So mut he nedis answer for his deth ywis.
When Machyn had yherd all Geffrey's tale
He rose of bench sodenly with colour wan and pale,
And seyd onto Beryn, Sir, ageyn the
I woll plete no more, for it wer gret pete
To combir yew with actions that beth of nobill kynde.
Graunt mercy! Sir, quod Geffrey; but yit ye shull fynde
Borowis or ye pas, amendis for to make
For our undewe vexacionne, and gage also us take
In sign of submyssioune for your injury,
As law woll and reson, for we woll uttirly
Procede tyll we have jugement finall;
And ther'for, Sir Steward, what that evir fall
Delay us no longer but gyve us jugement,
For tristith ye noon othir but we be fullich bent
To Isope for to wend, and in his high presence
Reherce al our plees, and have his sentence;
Then shull ye make fynys, and highlich be agrevid.
And as sone as the steward herd thes wordis mevid,
Reson, rycht, and law, seyd the steward tho,
Ye mut nedis have wher I woll or no;

And to preve my full wyll, or we ferther goon,
Quicklich he commaundit, and sparid nevir oon,
24 burgeysis in law best yherid,
Rehersyng them the plees, and how Geffrey answerid,
And on lyf and lym, and forfetur of good,
And as they wold nat lese the hall within their hood,
To draw a-part togidir, and by their all assent
Spare no man on lyve to gyve trew jugement.
And when thes 24 burgeysis had yherd
The charge of the steward, right sore they wer aferd
To lese ther own lyvis but they demed trowith;
And eke of their neybours they had grete rowith,
For they perseyvid clerelich in the plee throughout
Their frendis had the wors side, ther'of they had no dout,
And yf we deme trewly they woll be sore anoyid,
Yit it is betir then we be shamyd and distroyid.
And anoon they wer acordit, and seyd with Beryn,
And demed every pleyntif to make a grete fyne
With Beryn, and hym submyt hoolich to his grace
Body, good, and catell, for wrong and their trespase;
So ferforth, tyll at last it was so bout ybore
That Beryn had the doubill good that he had tofore,
And wyth joy and myrth, wyth all his company,
He droughe hym to his shippis ward wyth song and melody.
The steward and the burgeyse from the court bent
Into their own placis, and evir as they went

They talkid of the Romeyns, how ſotill they wer
To aray hym like a fole that for them ſhuld anſwer.
What vylith it, quod Hanybald, to angir or to curs?
And yit I am in certen I ſhall fare the wers
All the dayis of my lyfe for this day's pleding,
And ſo ſhal al the remnaunt; and their hondis wryng,
Both Syrophanes, and the blynd, the woman, and
And be bet aviſid er they eſtſonys pleyne, [Machyn,
And al othir perſonys wythyn this cete
Mell the les wyth Romeyns whils they here be;
For ſuch anothir fole was nevir yit yborn,
For he did naught ellis but evir with us ſcorn
Tyll he had us caught even by the ſhyn
With his ſotill wittis in our own grene.
Now woll I retourn to Beryn ageyn,
That of his grete lukir in hert was right feyne,
And ſo was all his meyne, as them ought wele,
That they wer ſo delyverid from turment like to hell;
And graciuſly relevid out of ther grete myſchef,
And yſet above in comfort and bouchef.
Now in ſoth, quod Beryn, it may nat be denied
N'ad Geffrey and his witt be we had be diſtroyid:
Ithankid be Almyghty God omnipotent
That for our conſolacioune Geffrey to us ſent!
And in proteſt opynly, here among yew alle,
Half my good, whils that I lyve, whatevir me befall,
I graunt it here to Geffrey, to gyve or to ſell,
And nevir to part from me, yf it wer his wyl,

And fare as well as I a morrow and eke on eve,
And nevir for man on lyve his company for to leve.
Graunt mercy! Sir, quod Geffrey, yowr profir is feir
But I desire no more but as ye me behete, [and grete,
To bryng me at Room, for this is covenaunte.
It shall be do, quod Beryn, and all the remnaunt.
Deperdeux! quod Geffrey, ther'of we shull wele do.
He rayid hym othirwise; and without wordis mo
They went to the dyner the hole company,
With pipis and wyth trompis, and othir melody:
And in the myddis of their mete gentil women fyve,
Maidens fresh atirid as myght be on lyve,
Com from the Duke Isope, lord of that regioune,
Everich wyth a present, and that of grete renown:
The first bare a cup of gold, and of asure fyne,
So corouse and so nobill that I can nat devyne;
The second brought a swerd yshethid, wyth seyntur
Ifretid all with pereles orient and pure;
The third had a mantell of lusty fresh colour,
The uttir part of purpill, yfurrid with pelour;
The ferth a cloth of gold, a worthy and a riche,
That nevir man tofore saw cloith it liche;
The fift bare a palme that stode tofore the deyse
In tokyn and sign of trowith and pese,
For that was the custom through all the contray;
The message was the levir and more plesant to pay.
The cup was uncoverid, the swerd was out ybrayid,
The mantell was unfold, the cloth along ylayid;

They knelid adown echone right tofore Beryn; [fyne:
The firſt did the meſſage, that taught was wel and
Iſope, ſhe ſeyd, Sir Beryn, that is our lord viall,
And gretith yew, and ſendith yew theſe preſentis all,
And joy hath of yewr wiſdom and of yewr gover-
naunce;
And preyd you to com and have with hym pleſaunce
To morowe, and ſe his palyſe, and toſport you there,
Yee and all your company. Beryn made noon anſwere,
But ſat ſtyll, and beheld the women and the ſondis;
And aftirward aviſely the ſwerd firſt he hondis
And commauhdit therewith all the wymmen waſſh
and fit,
And pryvelich chargit officers that with al their wit
To ſerve them of the beſt, and make them hertly chere
Reſſeyving al the preſentis in worſhipful manere.
I cannat wele expreſs the joy that they had,
But I ſuppoſe tofore that day that they were nat ſo glad
That they wer ſo aſcapid fortune and myſchefe,
And thonkid God above that al thing doith relefe;
For *Aftir myſty cloudis ther comith a cler ſonne,*
So aftir bale comyth bote, whoſo byde conne. [mete
The joy and nobley that they had whils they wer at
It vaylith nat at this tyme ther'of long to trete:
But Geffrey ſat with Beryn, as he had ſervid wele;
Their hedis they leyd togidir, and begon to tell
In what maner the wymen ſhuld be anſwered.
Geffrey evir avifid Beryn ther'of he leryd,

And of othir thingis how he hym ſhuld govern;
Beryn faverid wele ther'on, and faſt he gan to lern.
When all wer up the wymmen cam to take their leve;
Beryn, as fat hym wele of blode, them toward gan re-
And prey'd them hertly hym to recommend [leve,
Unto the worthy lordſhip of Iſope, that you ſend
To me that am unworthy, ſave of his grete nobley,
And thank hym of his gyftis as ye can beſt, and ſey,
To morow I woll be redy his heſt to fulfill,
With this I have ſave condit I may com hym tyll,
For me and al my feleſhip ſaff to com and go,
Truſting in his diſcrecioune that thoughe I ax ſo
He wol nat be diſpleſid; for in my contray
It hath evir be the cuſtom, and is into this day,
That yf a lord riall deſirith for to ſee
Eny maner perſone that is of las degre,
Er he approche his preſence he wol have in his honde
A ſaff condit enſelid, or els ſom othir bonde,
That he may com and pas without diſturbaunce;
Throughout all our marchis it is the obſervaunce.
Thes wymmen toke their leve without wordis mo,
Repeyring onto Iſope, and al as it was do
They reherſid redely, and faylid nevir a word,
To Iſope with his baronage ther he ſat at his borde,
Talkyng faſt of Romayns, and of their high prudence,
That in ſo many daungers made ſo wiſe defence.
But as ſone as Iſope had pleynlich yherd
Of Beryn's governaunce, that firſt ſeid the ſwerd

Afore al othir presentis, he demed in hys minde
That Beryn was ycom of som nobill kynde. [forgete;
The nyght was past; the morowe cam; Isope had nat
He chargit barons twelf with Beryn for to mete
To cond hym saff and his meyne; and al perfourmyd
was. 3260
Thre dayis ther they sportid hym in myrth and solas,
That throughe the wise instruccioune of Geffrey nyght
Beryn plesid Isope with wordis al to pay, [and dey
And had hym so in port and in governaunce
Of all honest myrthis and witty daliaunce, 3265
That Isope cast his chere to Beryn so groundly,
That at last ther was no man with Isope so pryvy,
Resorting to his shippis, comyng to and fro,
Thoroughe the wit of Geffrey, that eche day it fil so
That Isope coude nowher chere when Beryn was ab-
So Beryn must nedis eche day be aftir sent: [sent;
And chefe he was of counsell within the first yere,
Thoroughe the wit of Geffrey, that eche dey did hym
lere. 3273.
This Isope had a doughtir betwene hym and his wyfe
That was as feir a creature as myght bere lyfe,
Wyse, and eke bountevouse, and benyng with all,
That heir shuld be aftir his dey of his lordshippis alle;
So, shortly to conclude, the mariage was made
Betwene hir and Beryn, many a man to glade, 3279
Saff the burgeysis of the town, of falshede that were
But they wer evir hold so low ondir fote [rote:

That they might nat regne, but at last fawe
To leve their condicioune and their fals lawe!
Beryn and Geffrey made them so tame
That they amendit eche dey, and gat a betir name!
Thus Geffrey made Beryn his enemyes to ovircom,
And brought hym to worship thorough be his wysdom.
Now God us graunt grace to synde such a frende
When we have nede! and thus I make an ende.

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